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Short Ribs, page 61



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THE RULES FOR OUR INGREDIENTS
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Shown: summer vegetable sauté with roasted garlic sausage.



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Melting moments on set (from left): How many men does it take to shoot an ice cream cone? The star cone, holding up well, and her stunt double, made with instant mashed potatoes (which you definitely wouldn't want to eat). Oh, the mix-in options!



Ice Cream Season

RELOCATING FROM THE WEST COAST to the East required a few adjustments on my part (those first snow days, to begin with). But there was no way I was giving in to the concept of “seasonal” ice cream. Who knew that ice cream shops closed in the fall? It's a well-known fact that I have something of an ice cream habit; in fact, it's a rare night when we don't meet at the same bowl. What to do?

The solution to the local ice cream shortage arrived in the form of David Lebovitz's feature in this issue. The Paris-based cooking teacher and award-winning cookbook author brings his expertise to our Cooking Without Recipes feature and teaches us how to make a simple custard that easily freezes into any number of different ice creams. We tested our way through some two dozen variations, 18 of which make up our idea of a centerfold (pages 52–53). Getting all of those flavors to pose was something of a challenge; I'll let the photos above tell that story.

Of course, that's just one of the many stories that make up this start-of-summer issue. We've also got a picnic that bears no resemblance to the expected sandwich-and-chips menu, some exciting recipes for all the different beans that are hitting farmers' markets now, dueling crab cakes, and much more. And whatever you do, don't miss the ground-breaking feature we're calling “A New Way to Grill.” I don't want to give it all away here, but I'd wager you've never tried braising on your barbecue. Let's just say there's a first time for everything.



Laurie Buckle, editor
fc@taunton.com

more *Fine Cooking*

AWARDS

We're excited to report that three of our contributors recently received book award nominations from the International Association of Culinary Professionals (IACP). Contributing editor Ellie Krieger won in the health category for her best-selling book, *The Food You Crave*. Others nominated were contributing editor Pam Anderson for her new title, *The Perfect Recipe for Losing Weight and Eating Great*, and Martha Holmberg for her first book, *Puff*.

WEB

Is there one dish or technique you've never been able to really master? (Crusty bread? A high-rising soufflé?) Members of our new Cook's Club can share their pain, and enter to win a one-on-one tutorial with a *Fine Cooking* expert—we come to you! Go to FineCooking.com for more info.

SPECIAL ISSUES

For fans of our special *Fresh* issues, the newest edition is out now. It's a great mix of spring-into-summer recipes. Also, keep an eye out for this summer's *Grilling* issue, which hits newsstands in mid-June. It's the one source you'll need for delicious cookouts all summer long.



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THE WINNER

Reader tip: Measuring a reduction

When a recipe called for reducing a sauce or stock by a fraction, say by half, I always ended up measuring it with a cup several times and making a mess. To avoid this, I now prepare whatever I need to reduce in a straight-sided saucepan and dip a bamboo skewer straight into the sauce. I score the skewer with my knife at the height of the sauce, then the halfway mark (or whatever the recipe calls for) to note where my sauce should be. I continue to dip the skewer in every so often to see how much the sauce has reduced until I get to the amount I need.

—Ken Erdman,
Hydesville, California

We want to hear from you. Give us your best tip and we'll reward you with a kitchen prize. Ken is the winner of this Swiss Diamond shallow grill pan.



Beating us to the punch

This year, I'm planning my garden with the idea of canning or freezing some of my produce. Since I've never attempted this before, you are my first "go-to" resource. I think a special issue on this topic would be really great.

—Jane Amoroso, via email

Editors' reply: We're on it, Jane. This issue contains a handy guide to freezing all the great summer fruits and vegetables you will be harvesting. Plus, you can find several canning recipes online at FineCooking.com.

Quick & Delicious dilemma

I hope that you are not eliminating the Quick & Delicious section of *Fine Cooking*. That is my favorite part of the magazine and most of the recipes I use are from that section. While I like the changes, I miss Quick & Delicious.

—Merle Lewis, via email

Editors' reply: Quick & Delicious has a new name: Make It Tonight. The column is still packed with fast and easy recipes for weeknight cooking, but now they're faster

than ever: Every Make it Tonight recipe has to clock in at under 30 minutes, start to finish. We've also decided to focus on main course recipes, since that's the "main" question for most of us when time is of the essence.

Cook the issue

I'm thrilled to be a runner-up in the Cook the Issue Challenge on your Web site. It was a lot of fun, and I tried recipes I may have otherwise skipped over. Thanks for a great magazine. I love *Fine Cooking*.

—Lucinda Sears,
Acton, Massachusetts

The gift that keeps on giving

I was given your magazine as a gift two years ago. It is absolutely my favorite cooking magazine. I'm a competent cook, and I find your recipes very easy to follow. More important, most are geared to a kitchen stocked with the basics, so they don't require the purchase of a lot of exotic ingredients. Keep up the great work.

—Robert Hundt, via email

To heat or not to heat

In Maryellen Driscoll's article on nonstick skillet (Test Drive, *Fine Cooking* #97), she says not to heat a nonstick pan when it is empty. That runs counter to what I've always been taught: To get a good sear on meat you should heat a dry skillet for two or three minutes before adding the meat. What is the proper way to get a good sear?

—Walter Tower, via email

Contributing editor Maryellen Driscoll replies:

I wouldn't recommend using a nonstick pan to sear a steak or, for that matter, even brown a pork chop. For such a task, preheating a traditionally surfaced pan, such as stainless steel, over high or medium-high heat, without oil, until hot is the proper technique. If you get distracted and the pan overheats, you can just pull it off the heat momentarily to let it cool slightly. Nonstick isn't that resilient. When heated above 500°F, the nonstick coating begins to break down or degrade.

If you're set on using your nonstick pan for this kind of cooking, avoid anything higher than medium-high heat, and add a little oil, which will provide a good visual cue for how hot your nonstick pan is. Vegetable oil's smoke point is around 450°F. So if the oil starts to smoke, you know your nonstick pan is getting too hot for its own good.

CORRECTIONS

In our last issue, in Test Drive, we mistakenly published a photo of a Viking meat grinder attachment instead of a Cuisinart attachment. The Cuisinart attachment is pictured here.

In Where to Buy It, an 8x10-inch roasting rack was listed as available from kitchenworks.com; the correct Web site is kitchenworksinc.com. Also, the phone number for Teroforma is 877-899-1190. The correct retail price for the Le Creuset enameled-cast-iron rectangular baking and roasting dish is \$184.95

We regret these errors.



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Chef and meat guru **Bruce Aidells** ("A New Way to Grill: Barbecue-Braising," page 54) has written more than 10 cookbooks and is a frequent guest on TV and

radio cooking shows. He lives in the Bay Area with his wife, Nancy Oakes, who is the chef at Boulevard restaurant in San Francisco.

- **To a summer cookout, I would bring...** homemade sausages.
- **My latest food discovery is...** these wonderful spice mixes from Whole Spice, a Middle Eastern spice shop in Napa.
- **My culinary icon is...** Loni Kuhn.



Eric Ripert ("Crab Cakes," page 70) is the executive chef and co-owner of Le Bernardin in New York City, and the chair of City Harvest's Food Council.

He has co-written three cookbooks, including *On the Line* and *A Return to Cooking*, which was recently released in paperback. This fall, he will star in his own PBS television series, *Avec Eric*.

- **My top food destination is...** Puerto Rico.
- **My least favorite food is...** brains.
- **My guilty food pleasure is...** I don't feel guilty about the things I eat, but does dark chocolate at 3:00 in the morning count?



Maria Helm Sinskey ("Spill the Beans," page 38), former award-winning executive chef at Plump-Jack Café in San Francisco, is now the culinary director

of Robert Sinskey Vineyards, which she co-owns with her husband. Her new book, *Williams-Sonoma Family Meals: Creating Traditions in the Kitchen*, was published in March.

- **Three items always in my shopping cart are...** extra-virgin olive oil, a loaf of fresh bread, and Champagne.
- **My guilty food pleasure is...** iceberg lettuce.
- **My favorite aspect of my job is...** nurturing people with food.



St. John Frizell ("Pleased as Punch," page 36) is a food, drink, and travel writer whose work has appeared in *Oxford American*, *Edible Brooklyn*, and *Edible Manhat-*

tan, as well as on epicurious.com. This spring, he will put his former bartending experience at New York's Pegu Club to good use in his own café-bar, Fort Defiance, in the Red Hook neighborhood of Brooklyn.

- **To a summer cookout, I would bring...** a pitcher of margaritas or mojitos. Everyone loves them, and they go down easy.
- **My go-to weeknight dinner is...** chicken under a brick.
- **My favorite thing about my job is...** talking to people. As a writer and bartender, you have license to ask anyone anything.



Susan Sugarman's food styling ("A New Way to Grill," page 54; "Splendor in the Grass," page 62; and "Crab Cakes," page 70) regularly appears in *O, The Oprah Magazine*, *The New York Times Magazine*, and *Martha Stewart Living*, where she

was a food editor for 13 years.

- **For breakfast, I eat...** roasted, unsalted cashews and freshly squeezed Satsuma mandarin orange juice.
- **The last thing I cooked was...** jerk-rubbed hanger steak.
- **My culinary icon is...** Italy.



Avid food blogger, cooking teacher, and critically acclaimed cookbook author **David Lebovitz** ("Scoopd!," page 46) is a veteran of Chez Panisse, where he

was a baker. His newest book, *The Sweet Life in Paris*, was published this spring.

- **The last thing I ate was...** a black radish dipped in fleur de sel.
- **The dish I most want to learn to cook is...** Girl Scouts' Thin Mints.
- **My drink of choice is...** sparkling fermented cider, because you can drink a lot of it without getting trashed.

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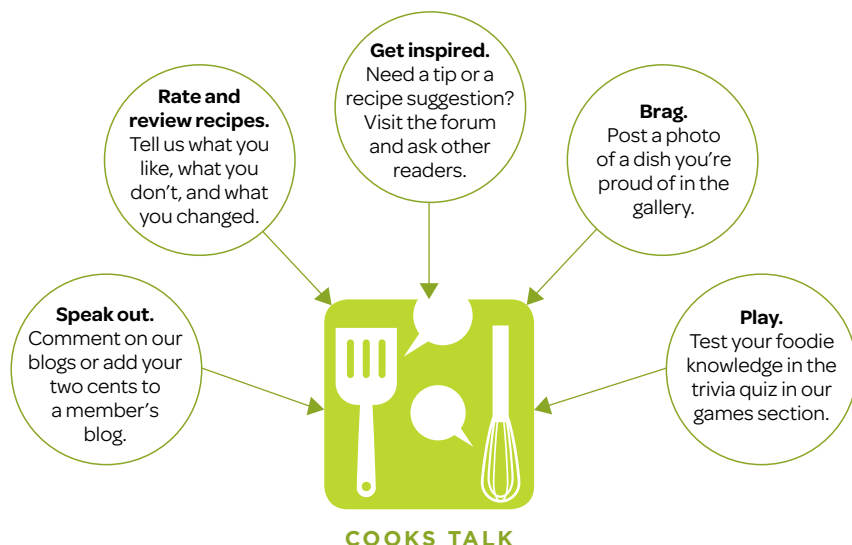
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Questions of the Day

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the farm report

What's in season near you? Share pictures of the fruits and vegetables you're finding at your local farmers' market or pulling from your own garden, and tell us what you're making with them in our new members' blog, **Farm to Fork**.



Winner's Spotlight

Congratulations to Barbara Jacobson (left), the winner of our first **Cook the Issue**

Challenge. Barbara cooked and photographed all the recipes in our February/March issue, many of them more than

once. Then she improvised and posted several variations, including a blood-orange marmalade and a chocolate-mousse tart.

Barbara wins a \$200 Cooking.com gift card. Check out FineCooking.com for our latest contest.

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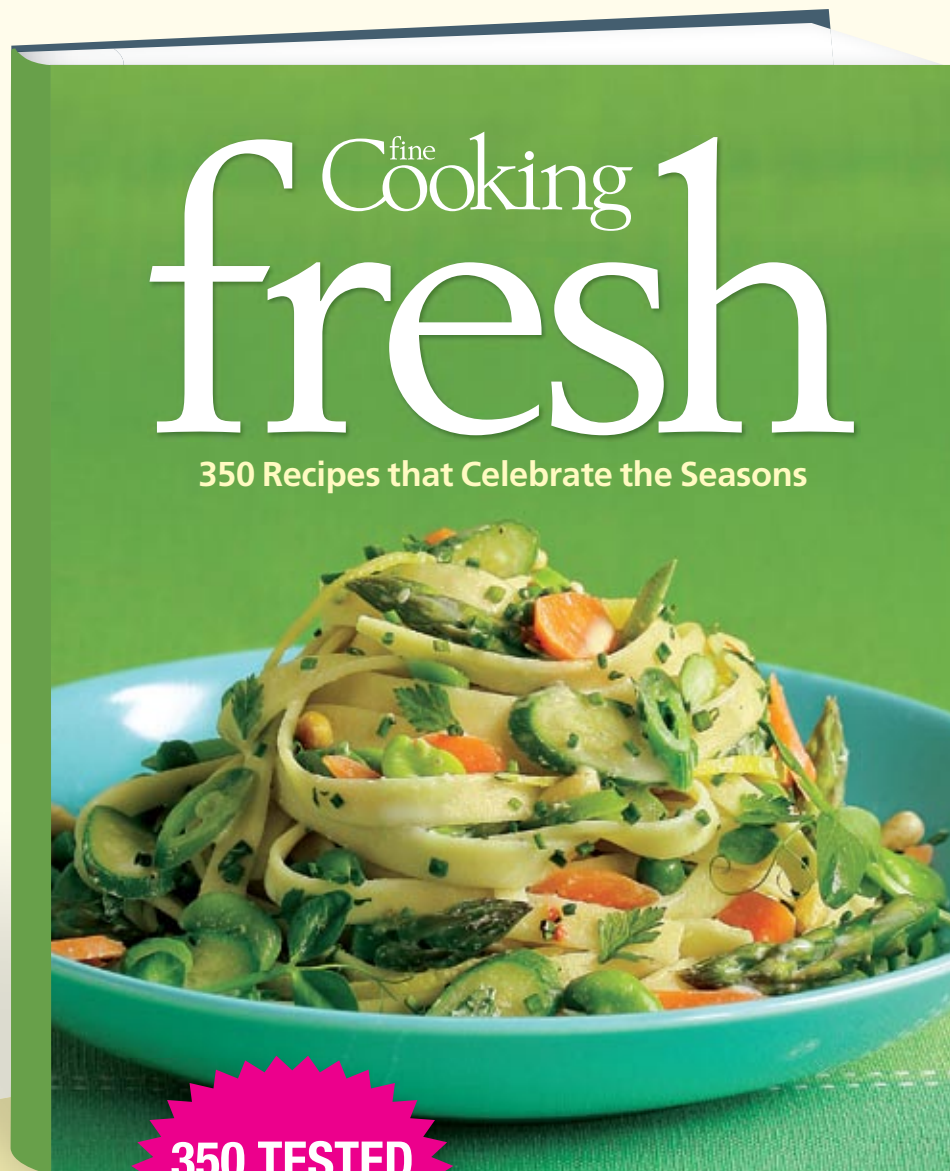
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MARKETPLACE

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Kohlrabi

With its curious, Sputnik-like shape, kohlrabi has no trouble standing out among the more familiar vegetables in the produce aisle. But what exactly is it? And, most important, how do you cook with it? Read on for some answers.

What it is

It may look like a turnip, but kohlrabi is a type of cabbage related more to broc-

coli and cauliflower than to any kind of root vegetable. It's a bulbous stem that grows just above ground, with leafy stalks protruding upward from various parts of the bulb. Both bulb and leaves are edible and are best cooked separately. You can find purple and green kohlrabi, although both are white inside and taste essentially the same.

Continued on page 17



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TRY THIS KOHLRABI

Why we love it

We can't get enough of kohlrabi's crisp, juicy texture and unusual flavor, which combines the earthy sweetness of cabbage and the crunchy bite of a turnip, with a hint of radish-like heat. Kohlrabi is delicious paired with chives, watercress, radishes, tomatoes, carrots, apples, and bacon as well as with seasonings like horseradish, sesame, ginger, and mustard. You can pickle it or use it as you would cabbage in your favorite slaws.

How to buy and store it

Look for bulbs 3 inches in diameter or less (about the size of a medium turnip). They're more tender and delicate in flavor than larger ones and usually don't require peeling. Large bulbs tend to be tough and woody, with a hard outer layer. Cut the leafy stalks off the bulbs and refrigerate them separately in zip-top bags. If stored properly, the bulbs can last a few weeks. The leaves, however, should be consumed within two or three days.

How to cook it

Use kohlrabi bulbs raw—shredded or thinly sliced—to add crunch to slaws and salads. Or cook them in a variety of ways. They're tasty sautéed or roasted (cut them into thin slices or bite-size wedges first) or added to your favorite braises and stews. You can also boil the bulbs until tender and mash them. When cooked, kohlrabi retains some of its crunchy texture, but the flavor mellows quite a bit. Treat the leafy tops as you would kale or collard greens: Sauté them in oil or add them to soups and stews in the last 15 minutes or so of cooking (trim off the stalks before cooking).

—Melissa Pellegrino

NEWS BITE

Politics of the plate

The laws governing food policy are complex and political, encompassing agribusiness, the obesity epidemic, and food safety. Expect the issue to come to a head this summer as Congress debates reauthorization of the Child Nutrition Act. This governs the school lunch program, but at stake are changes in the very way America's food system works. Go to the Food Research and Action Center (frac.org) for details.

kohlrabi-radish slaw with cumin and cilantro

To speed up the vegetable prep, use the grating and slicing blades on a food processor for the radishes, carrots, and cabbage, and the julienne cutter on a mandoline for the kohlrabi.

Serves 8

- 3 Tbs. white wine vinegar**
- 1 tsp. Dijon mustard**
- 1 tsp. clover honey**
- ¼ tsp. cumin seeds, toasted, coarsely ground in a mortar and pestle**
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**
- 5 Tbs. canola oil**
- 5 radishes, grated (about 1 cup)**
- 3 medium carrots, grated (about 1½ cups)**
- 2 small unpeeled kohlrabi bulbs (purple, green, or both), trimmed and cut into ½-inch-thick matchsticks (3 cups)**

- ½ medium head green cabbage (about 1 lb.), thinly sliced (5 cups)**
- ⅓ cup chopped fresh cilantro**

In a small bowl whisk the vinegar, mustard, honey, cumin, ¼ tsp. salt, and a pinch of pepper. Gradually whisk in the canola oil until combined. **Put the radishes, carrot, kohlrabi, cabbage, and cilantro** in a large bowl. Pour in the dressing and gently toss to combine. Season to taste with salt and pepper.





WHAT WE'RE COOKING NOW

Leeks, Peas, and Strawberries

Nine ways to use three seasonal ingredients we can't get enough of. *Fine Cooking* editors share some delicious ideas.



Strawberries



Sarah Breckenridge:

One of my favorite strawberry desserts is as simple as setting out whole ripe berries with a bowl of sour cream

(or crème fraîche) and a bowl of brown sugar and letting people dip away. For a tidier presentation, stir together the brown sugar and sour cream and drop a dollop over sliced berries.



Juli Roberts:

For a fast dessert, I macerate strawberry quarters in balsamic vinegar (preferably authentic Aceto Balsamico di Modena)

and a bit of sugar and serve over vanilla ice cream.



Melissa Pellegrino:

Try making a spinach salad with sliced strawberries, blue cheese, toasted almonds, and a balsamic vinaigrette.

Peas



Laura Giannatempo:

I love to quick-braise peas in good chicken or vegetable broth and then finish them with butter and lots of chopped fresh

herbs. Mint is a natural, but I also like thyme or basil.



Denise Mickelsen:

Treat peas like fava beans and make a tasty fresh pea spread (it's especially delicious early in the season, when

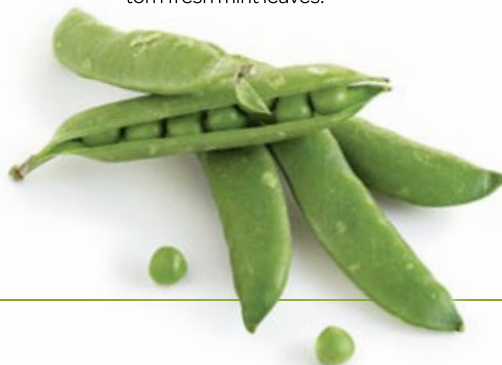
the peas are tiny and sweet). Blanch peas in salted water for a minute or so, drain, and then mash them with grated pecorino, extra-virgin olive oil, a touch of lemon juice, salt, and pepper. Spread thickly on toasted baguette slices.



Lisa Waddle:

For a great quick pasta, start by cooking a minced shallot in a little olive oil until soft and then add some grated

lemon zest. Meanwhile, cook the pasta shape of your choice in boiling salted water and add peas in the last two minutes. Drain, saving some of the water, and then add the pasta and peas to the shallots, along with some of the pasta water and a squeeze of lemon juice. Top with grated Parmigiano-Reggiano and torn fresh mint leaves.



Leeks

Sarah Breckenridge: Make a melted-leek-topped flatbread by slicing leeks into half-moons and then cooking them slowly in butter and olive oil until completely tender. Stir in a little crème fraîche, spoon the mixture on top of a stretched round of pizza dough, and bake on a pizza stone (or on the grill).



Allison Ehri Kreidler:

In France, it's very common to halve trimmed small leeks lengthwise (white and light-green parts), steam them until

completely tender, and toss them with a Dijon vinaigrette.



Jennifer Armentrout:

Chef and cookbook author David Tanis gave me the idea to use leeks as a bed for baked fish. Slowly cook thinly sliced

leeks in butter or oil with lots of minced garlic, chopped fresh thyme and sage, salt, and pepper until soft but not brown. Spread in a baking dish and arrange skinless fish fillets on top. Drizzle the fish with a little oil and then sprinkle with finely grated lemon zest, salt, and pepper. Bake at 400°F.

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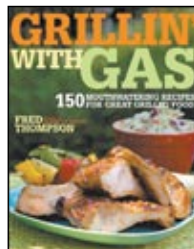
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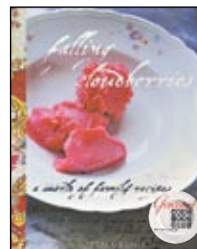
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PRESERVING THE SEASON

The Big Freeze

BY ABIGAIL JOHNSON DODGE

IF YOU HAVE A VEGETABLE GARDEN in the back yard, or even if you're just a farmers' market junkie, you know you can't possibly use up the season's bounty of fruits and vegetables. It's just too much in too little time. If jams and preserves are not your thing, think about freezing, which is a great way to preserve the fresh flavors of fruits and veggies at their peak. And it's easy—all you need is a baking sheet, heavy-duty freezer bags, and the best your summer garden has to offer (oh, and a freezer, of course). Here's a handy guide for freezing all the season's favorites.

how to freeze

Three easy steps from fresh to frozen

1. Create a level area in your freezer to fit a rimmed baking sheet. If you're strapped for space, use something smaller—like a cake pan—and repeat the freezing steps below as needed.
2. Line the baking sheet with parchment, foil, or waxed paper. Arrange the prepared fruits or vegetables in a single layer, making sure they don't touch (see chart opposite for prep directions). Freeze until solid, 60 to 90 minutes, depending on size and freezer temperature.
3. Transfer to heavy-duty freezer bags. Press out as much air from the bag as possible (if you have a vacuum sealer, use it), seal, and store in the back of the freezer (the coldest part) until ready to use. To thaw, transfer the amount you need to a bowl or plate and thaw in the refrigerator.

from freezer to table

Freezing is a great way to preserve flavor, but don't expect fruits and vegetables that have been frozen to have the same texture as fresh ones. That's why it's better to cook with them than eat them out of hand. Here's how:

FRUITS

Frozen: Use in pie or galette fillings and in smoothies.

Partially frozen (5 to 10 minutes out of the freezer at room temperature): Use in sauces, smoothies, cake batters, and pancakes, and as garnishes.

Thawed: Use in sauces, smoothies, and jams.

VEGETABLES

Frozen: Use in soups, braises, and stews, and steamed.

Thawed: Use in sautés, stir-fries, and purées.

A couple of exceptions: Tomatoes should always be thawed and drained before using in soups, braises, stews, and sauces (don't use in sautés or stir-fries). Corn on the cob can be steamed frozen but should be thawed before grilling.


















freezer basics

Freezer temp Set your freezer at 0°F or colder (use a freezer thermometer to check). Many home freezers are opened and closed frequently, causing the temperature to fluctuate. This makes fruits and vegetables thaw slightly and refreeze—not ideal for texture and taste. To prevent this, stash frozen fruits and veggies as far from the door as possible.

Freezing time Stand-alone freezer (infrequently opened chest or upright): 10 to 12 months. Frequently opened freezer compartment: 3 months.

How to prep 20 fruits and vegetables for freezing

| VEGETABLES | | PREP | BLANCH |
|---|---|---|--|
| English peas |  | Shell peas | Yes (1 to 1½ minutes) |
| Snap peas and snow peas |  | Trim strings | Yes (1 to 1½ minutes) |
| Wax or green beans |  | Trim stem ends | Yes (1 to 2 minutes) |
| Bell peppers |  | Remove stem and seeds and cut into 4 pieces or into strips or dice | No |
| Asparagus |  | Trim woody bottoms | Yes (1 to 2 minutes) |
| Spinach |  | Wash and trim | Yes (1 to 1½ minutes) |
| Tomatoes |  | Peel (you'll need to blanch them first), seed, and cut into chunks | Yes, to remove the peel (30 seconds) |
| Broccoli and cauliflower |  | Remove stems and cut florets into 1½-inch pieces | Yes (2 to 3 minutes) |
| Corn |  | Remove husks and leave the cob whole | Yes (3 to 5 minutes); cut kernels off after blanching, if needed |
| Rhubarb |  | Cut into 2-inch chunks | Not necessary but can help retain the vivid color |
| FRUITS | | PREP | BLANCH |
| Raspberries, blueberries, blackberries |  | Leave whole, wash, and dry well | No |
| Strawberries |  | Remove hull, wash, and dry well | No |
| Cherries |  | Leave whole, wash, and dry well; remove the pit, if you like | No |
| Peaches and nectarines |  | Peel (the peel hardens during freezing) and remove the pit; then cut into 1-inch wedges | No |
| Apricots |  | Remove the pit and cut in half, or in quarters if large | No |

why blanch?

Most vegetables benefit from blanching before freezing. The process stops the enzymes' aging action while slowing vitamin and nutrient loss. It also brightens and sets the vegetables' color. In general, fruits don't need blanching (unless it's to remove the peel). Here's how to blanch:

1. Bring a large pot of water to a rolling boil (about 2 quarts per 2 to 3 cups of vegetables).
2. Working in small batches, add the vegetables. Allow the water to return to a boil and cook very briefly (see the chart for blanching times).
3. Using a large slotted spoon, scoop out the veggies and immediately immerse them in a large bowl of ice water to stop the cooking. Remove and dry thoroughly before freezing.

*Abigail Johnson Dodge
is a Fine Cooking
contributing editor.*



BIG BUY COOKING

Hearts of Palm

Making the most of a favorite food find from a warehouse store.
BY ALLISON EHRI KREITLER

YOU LOVE THE SOFT CRUNCH and mild artichoke flavor of hearts of palm, so you buy a big jar—or two. (We know! We do the same.) But what else can you do with these beauties besides toss them in salads? We have some ideas. Here are three amazing dishes—an hors d'oeuvre, a starter, and a side—that take this summer favorite to a whole new level.



hearts of palm and radish coins with shrimp

Yields 24 hors d'oeuvres

- 3–4 hearts of palm (1- to 1½-inch diameter), rinsed and cut into ¼-inch-thick coins (you'll need 24)
- 2 Tbs. plus ¼ tsp. fresh lime juice
- 2 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil
- Pinch of granulated sugar
- Kosher salt
- 1 Tbs. mayonnaise, preferably Hellmann's or Best Foods brand
- ¼ tsp. coriander seeds, toasted and coarsely ground in a mortar
- ¼ tsp. freshly grated lime zest
- Pinch of cayenne
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 48 small peeled and deveined cooked shrimp (71 to 90 or 100 to 150 per lb.)
- 5–6 radishes (1 to 1½ inches wide), sliced into ¼-inch-thick coins (you'll need 24)
- 24 fresh cilantro leaves for garnish

Lay the palm coins in a single layer in a nonreactive dish. Drizzle with 2 Tbs. of the lime juice, 3 Tbs. water, and the olive

The Big Buy

What: Hearts of palm packed in water.

How much: Two 25-oz. jars.

How to store: Once opened, refrigerate them in their jar, covered in the water they come in. They will keep for up to two weeks. Hearts of palm benefit from quick rinsing and drying before using, which helps remove some of the jarred flavor.

oil. Sprinkle evenly with sugar and a generous pinch of salt. Shake the dish to coat the palm coins and let sit while preparing the remaining ingredients.

In a medium bowl, mix the remaining $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. lime juice with the mayonnaise, coriander seeds, lime zest, cayenne, a generous pinch of salt, and a pinch of pepper. Toss the shrimp with the mayonnaise and season to taste with salt and pepper.

Carefully drain the hearts of palm and pat dry with paper towels. Top each radish coin with a palm coin of similar size, two shrimp, and a cilantro leaf.

arugula with hearts of palm, grapefruit, and oil-cured olives

Serves 4 as an appetizer

- 1 large Ruby Red grapefruit
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ Tbs. Champagne vinegar
- 1 tsp. finely chopped fresh rosemary
- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. crushed red pepper flakes
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 3 hearts of palm, rinsed, halved lengthwise, and cut on a diagonal into $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch pieces (about $\frac{3}{4}$ cup)
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup pitted black oil-cured olives, halved lengthwise
- 7 oz. arugula (preferably bunched), trimmed (about 5 loosely packed cups)
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup loosely packed fresh flat-leaf parsley leaves



Finely grate $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. zest from the grapefruit; set aside. Slice just enough off the top and bottom of the grapefruit to expose the fruit. Stand the grapefruit on one cut end and slice away all of the peel and white pith. Working over a bowl, cut the segments away from the membranes, letting them fall into the bowl. Then, over another bowl, squeeze the membranes to get any remaining juice. Cut each segment into thirds.

In a small bowl, whisk 2 Tbs. of the reserved grapefruit juice and the zest with the oil, vinegar, rosemary, red pepper flakes, $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. salt, and a pinch of pepper.

In a small bowl, mix the grapefruit segments, hearts of palm, and olives with 2 Tbs. of the dressing.

Toss the arugula and parsley in a large bowl with a generous pinch of salt and 3 Tbs. of the dressing. Divide the arugula among 4 plates, top with the hearts of palm mixture, and drizzle with the remaining dressing, if desired.

grilled hearts of palm, radicchio, and asparagus

This makes a great accompaniment to grilled chicken or pork. Use a vegetable peeler to shave the Parmigiano.

Serves 4 as a side dish

- 5 hearts of palm, rinsed and patted dry
- $\frac{1}{2}$ head radicchio, halved lengthwise (about 4 oz.)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ bunch asparagus, ends trimmed (about 8 oz.)
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1 Tbs. fresh lemon juice
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. finely grated lemon zest
- Pinch of granulated sugar
- 3 very thin slices prosciutto di Parma, torn into strips (about $1\frac{1}{4}$ oz.)
- 1 oz. shaved Parmigiano-Reggiano (scant $\frac{1}{2}$ cup)

Heat a gas grill on high or prepare a hot charcoal grill fire.

In a large bowl, toss the hearts of palm, radicchio, and asparagus with

2 Tbs. of the olive oil, $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. salt, and several grinds pepper. Grill, flipping as needed, until nicely marked all over and tender, 4 to 5 minutes total. Set aside until cool enough to handle.

Meanwhile, in a small bowl, whisk the remaining 2 Tbs. olive oil with the lemon juice, zest, sugar, $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. salt, and a pinch of pepper.

Core the radicchio. Cut the radicchio, asparagus, and hearts of palm into pieces about 3 inches long by $\frac{1}{2}$ inch wide. Return to the large bowl and toss with the prosciutto, Parmigiano, and 2 Tbs. of the vinaigrette. Serve drizzled with the remaining vinaigrette, if desired.



NEWS BITE

Label lessons

Two new Web sites help sort out the jargon on food labels:

eBrandAid.com uncovers marketing tricks some manufacturers use to make you think a product is healthful, when in fact it should be avoided. Created by a panel of marketing and nutrition experts, the site names names, so you can check brands you buy and learn what to look for.

Labelwatch.com also takes a brand-name approach, letting you look up ingredient labels of more than 27,000 products. Select an ingredient to get a definition and any research on it, from pyridoxine hydrochloride (a beneficial B vitamin found in some breakfast cereals) to disodium guanylate (an additive in some canned soup that's related to MSG).



The Myths of Marinating

Before firing up the grill, get the facts on what this technique can (and can't) do. **BY BRIAN GEIGER**

DRAGONS. SWIMMING JUST AFTER EATING. The number of calories in cake eaten on your birthday. The tenderizing effect of a marinade. What's the connection? All of these things are surrounded in mythology.

With grilling season upon us, I thought I'd put aside my dragon sword and tackle some of the more widely held beliefs about marinades to see how they hold up to Food Geek scrutiny.

MYTH 1: A marinade will infuse a steak completely if you let it soak long enough. (Or if you vacuum seal it. Or if you inject the marinade into the steak.)

FACT: Whether three minutes or three days, a marinade penetrates the meat by only a fraction of an inch. Here's an easy experiment you can do to prove this. Take a steak, plop it in a zip-top bag with some marinade, squeeze out as much of the air as possible, and put it in your refrigerator for 3 days. Take it out, cut the steak in half, and see where the meat is darker. You'll find the marinade has perme-

ated about 1/8 inch. The reason: Meat is made up of bundles of muscle fibers, which are packed densely together. That density blocks the marinade from getting through.

Those vacuum sealers that claim to help the marinade drill down deeper and faster don't do anything to pull apart the cells and let the marinade (or any other liquid) in.

You could inject some marinade deeper into the meat using a syringe sold specifically for that purpose. This would give you pockets of flavor below the surface. The problem is that the syringe punctures the surface of the meat,



creating little escape hatches for the juices during cooking. After all, what lets liquid in also lets it out, and while the steak is cooking and shrinking, the moisture is going to look for any way it can get out. A dry steak is the opposite of what you're going for, so resist the temptation.

Besides, you don't really want your entire steak to taste like the marinade. The goal is to enhance the flavor of the meat, not cover it up.

THE LESSON: Marinades may never penetrate deeply into a piece of meat, but they do flavor the surface.

MYTH 2: A marinade will tenderize a tough piece of meat.

FACT: Not exactly. As I explained above, a marinade doesn't penetrate very deeply into a piece of meat, so it can't transform its makeup. Some chemical tenderizing does take place on the surface, because the acids in a marinade break down muscle tissue, a process called denaturing. Let it go too long, though, and the muscle tissue will coagulate, squeezing out water molecules and resulting in mushy yet tough meat.

How long is too long? Depends on what you're marinating and how strong an acid you're using. A relatively tough cut of meat like flank steak can handle a more acidic marinade (say one part acid to two parts oil) longer than delicate shrimp (which would be better served with an acid-to-oil ratio of one

to four). The acid in yogurt and buttermilk is far milder than that in wine, vinegar, and lemon juice. Yogurt and buttermilk also contain calcium, which activates enzymes in meat that break down muscle fibers. So dairy products are a better choice for delicate proteins.

But the only way to tenderize meat beyond the surface is through cooking slowly in a liquid (also known as braising) or through aging. In aging, natural enzymes in the meat break down the tough connective tissues all the way through the meat. Wet aging is done by sealing the meat air-tight in the fridge; dry aging involves a controlled rotting in a cool, well-ventilated environment. It causes molds and yeasts to grow on the surface, which are cut off before cooking.

In olden days, people left meats in an acidic marinade for days or weeks, and the acid in the marinade protected the surface of the meat from spoiling while the rest of the meat matured. (Of course, the surface texture of the meat suffered.) As a result, many people think it's the marinade that leads to tender meat, when it's really time that does the work.

THE LESSON: Aging, not marinating, is the key to tender meat.

MYTH 3: Marinating always takes place before cooking.

FACT: Sometimes, a marinade can *do* the cooking. As explained in Myth 2, the acid in a marinade denatures a food's proteins. Heat does the same thing. So when a delicate protein like fish is bathed in an acid, such as lemon juice, the proteins will be denatured and then coagulate (technically, the acid is unraveling the molecules and altering their

chemical and physical properties). This causes raw foods to firm up and appear more opaque, as in ceviche.

THE LESSON: A marinade can take the place of cooking.

MYTH 4: Some marinades can make grilled foods healthier.

FACT: This one is true, actually. If you cook red meat at a high enough temperature, you can create heterocyclic amines, or HCAs. HCAs are carcinogenic, so you'd be smart to avoid them. However, herbs in the mint family, such as sage, thyme, rosemary, and, er, mint, contain phenolic compounds, which are impressive antioxidants. It's believed that the phenolic compounds keep the HCAs from forming, according to a study published by a team of food researchers at Kansas State University. A marinade with oil allows those herbs to stick to the surface of the meat and do their antioxidant best.

THE LESSON: Some myths are true.

MYTH 5: A marinade adds flavor to meat.

FACT: This one is true as well. Restrained marinating adds a layer of flavor to meats and vegetables that can elevate a simple steak or chicken leg. Think about your last grilling adventure. An average steak is received with a chorus of "Great steak!" and promptly forgotten. A steak marinated briefly in a balanced mixture of wine, spices, and oil and then grilled perfectly haunts the eater, even when the days of summer have waned. The memory may have your guests digging out their grills in winter in an attempt to recapture that taste experience.

THE LESSON: A marinade is the secret to creating a steak of legend.

You can almost certainly swim after eating without getting cramps, and cake eaten on your birthday probably has some calories after all. But there is still magic in the way a marinade adds flavor to grilled foods. With science as your guide, you can bring a mythical experience to your backyard grilling party every time.

Brian Geiger is a robotics project manager by day and The Food Geek at night and on weekends. He blogs at FineCooking.com.

anatomy of a marinade

A marinade has three essential elements. Here's what they do:

ACID

Whether vinegar, citrus juice, wine, buttermilk, or yogurt, acid breaks down the protein on the surface of the meat, allowing it to initially absorb moisture and flavor.

AROMATICS

Herbs, spices, chile peppers, garlic, ginger, and onion provide most of the flavor.

OIL

This is the flavor delivery system. Because it is more viscous than water, oil helps hold herbs and aromatics to the surface of the meat or vegetable.



HOW TO MAKE

Vichyssoise

This chilled potato-leek soup is an elegant summer classic.

BY JAMES PETERSON

SMOOTH, CREAMY, AND COLD, classic French vichyssoise is the perfect hot-weather soup. And it's so easy to make, it should be in every cook's recipe box. The technique is straightforward: Leeks and potatoes are simmered in milk and then puréed in a blender. The challenge is to get the smoothest, silkiest texture possible—because that's what vichyssoise is all about.

Need to Know

Four essential tips for perfect texture

1 Choose the right potatoes.

With their rich flavor and medium starch content, Yukon Gold potatoes are the best choice. Russets are too starchy and can make the soup mealy, while waxy potatoes like Red Bliss can turn it gluey and gelatinous.

2 Purée in a blender.

For the absolute finest texture, purée in a regular blender; an immersion (hand) blender won't give you as smooth a result.

3 Strain well.

To get rid of any residual coarseness, strain the soup through a fine sieve, using the back of a spoon or ladle to push the soup through (as shown in the photo below).

4 Add water.

If the soup is too thick, add a little cold water to thin it before serving. The consistency should be that of heavy cream.

**COOK'S TIP**

To clean a leek

Leeks grow with soil piled around them, so grit and dirt accumulate between their layers. To clean a leek thoroughly, trim the root end and cut off the dark-green top. Then, slit the leek lengthwise, without cutting all the way through. Open it like a book and hold it root end up under cold running water, riffling through the layers until it is completely clean.

tool box

The simple utensils needed for vichyssoise are essential to any well-stocked kitchen:

- 4-quart pot
- Blender
- Fine sieve



classic vichyssoise

Serve this refreshing cold soup as a first course or as a light lunch, accompanied by a green salad.

Yields about 6 cups; serves 6

- 4 medium leeks, trimmed and washed as directed opposite, sliced $\frac{1}{8}$ inch thick (about 3 cups)**
- 2 large Yukon Gold potatoes, peeled and sliced $\frac{1}{8}$ inch thick (about 4 cups)**
- 2 cups whole milk**
- Kosher salt**
- 1 cup heavy cream**
- 1 Tbs. thinly sliced fresh chives, for garnish**

Combine the leeks, potatoes, milk, and 2 cups water in a 4-quart pot.

Bring to a simmer over medium-high heat. Add $1\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. salt, reduce the heat to medium low, and simmer until a potato slice falls apart when you poke it with a fork, about 20 minutes. Remove from the heat, stir in the cream, and let cool briefly.

Purée the soup, preferably using a regular blender and working in batches, filling it only half way each time.

Strain the puréed soup through a fine sieve.

Let cool to room temperature, stirring occasionally (stirring prevents a skin from forming), and then refrigerate until thoroughly chilled.

Before serving, thin the soup with water if necessary—it should be the consistency of heavy cream. Season to taste with salt. Serve cold in chilled bowls, garnished with the chives.

James Peterson is a cooking teacher and award-winning cookbook author.



GO SHOPPING

Great Finds

Our latest buys for the kitchen and table. BY DENISE MICKELSEN

Sweet Treats

Husband-and-wife team Don and Sue Morris began selling their all-natural, buttery madeleines from the back of their Volkswagon bus in 1976; today, the tender cakes are a bit easier to get (even Whole Foods sells them), and we can't stop eating them. Available in five flavors (lemon zest is our favorite); prices vary. **Donsuemor.com;** for stores, call 888-420-4441.



Take It Outside

It's easy to enjoy your wine in the sunshine with this all-in-one picnic carrier, which includes tumblers, a corkscrew, and an insulated bag to keep your bottle cool. **Enid wine picnic tin, \$130 at picnicfun.com; 800-706-3981.**



Eco-Chic

The stylish designs that decorate these stainless-steel water bottles are just part of their appeal—they're also BPA-free and come in three sizes. **\$16 to \$21; earthlust.com for stores; 415-252-5878.**

Three in One

Sagaform's sleek new pasta tool can be used three ways: you can measure dried pasta, serve it after cooking, and even grate cheese to finish the dish. **\$18 at conranusa.com; 866-755-9079.**



Family Affair

These artisanal preserves, made in small batches from fruits produced on an organic family farm in Ortezzano, Italy, are intensely flavorful and have just the right touch of sweetness. **Muccichini preserves, \$9.95 to \$18.95 a jar, assorted flavors (apricot is shown here) at formaggiokitchen.com; 888-212-3224.**



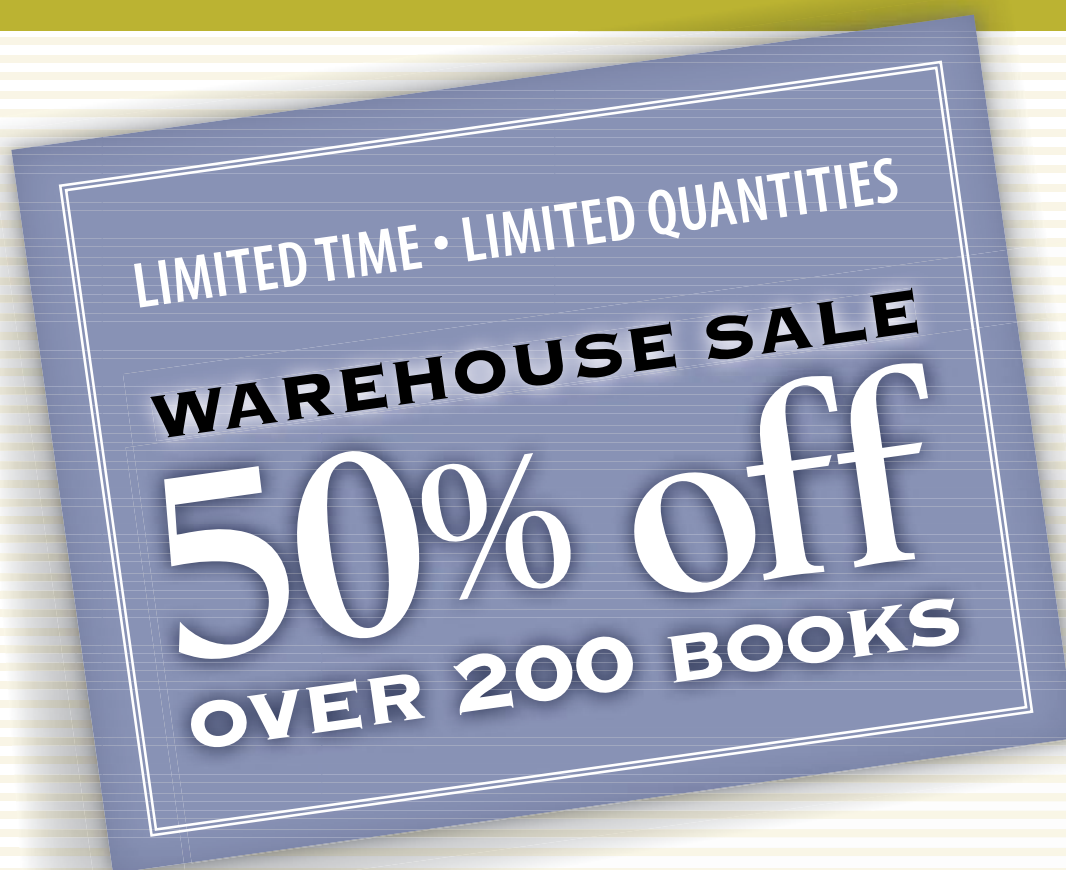
Natural Elegance

Made from fallen Pennsylvania hardwood trees, these graceful serving utensils were designed after model airplane propellers. **Spoon, fork, and spreader set, \$55 at teroforma.com; 877-899-1190.**



Photographs by Scott Phillips

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The Reading List

New must-buys for food lovers. BY KIMBERLY Y. MASIBAY

Well-Preserved

Recipes and Techniques for Putting Up Small Batches of Seasonal Foods

By Eugenia Bone
(Clarkson Potter, \$25)

In these waste-not, want-not times, it's no surprise that canning and preserving are staging a big comeback. What is surprising, though, is how elegant and accessible these endeavors are in the hands of food writer Eugenia Bone.

Bone has perfected simpler techniques for putting up small amounts of seasonal foods using low-tech options like freezing, curing, and oil-preserving. Though she does cover traditional canning and pickling methods, this book isn't the place to look for old-fashioned jams for your morning toast. Bone treats her urbane alcohol-, vinegar-, and herb-spiked preserves like condiments, brushing Apricot-Amaretto Jam over a garlic-studded pork roast, and stirring Pear, Port, and Thyme Conserve into silky butternut squash soup.

Bone puts up far more than fruit, though, and offers recipes for pickled and marinated vegetables; nut, bean, and mushroom sauces; and cured, smoked, and oil-preserved meats, poultry, and

fish. If, like Bone, you can't seem to stop overbuying at the farmers' market, then this captivating book just might prove to be your saving grace.

Seven Fires, Grilling the Argentine Way

By Francis Mallmann
with Peter Kaminsky
(Artisan Books, \$35)

Judging from this glorious book, Patagonian chef Francis Mallmann, one of Buenos Aires's most celebrated restaurateurs, is nothing less than a poetic genius of the flame. His recipes—from Pork Loin Chops Wrapped in Crisped Prosciutto and Sage, to Caramelized Apple Pancakes, to simple “Burnt” Tomato Halves—are completely approachable. And his cooking is utterly unpretentious, a cuisine “of wood fire and cast iron” inspired by his Andean heritage.

Throughout the book, Mallmann details his seven fiery techniques for grilling. You could amuse yourself all summer long exploring his methods, from the massively hot *infiernillo*, in which large cuts of salt-encrusted meat roast between two fires, one above and one below, to the gentle *rescoldo*, where whole pumpkins, potatoes, or unhusked

ears of corn cook beneath the embers and ashes of a slowly dying fire.

Try Mallmann's recipe for A Perfect Steak. Then try it again. And again. The ingredients couldn't be simpler: rib-eye steak, coarse salt. Attaining perfection—that heavenly confluence of seared crust and rosy succulence—may require some practice. But that's just part of the fun.

I Loved, I Lost, I Made Spaghetti

By Giulia Melucci
(Grand Central Publishing, \$23.99)

When life gives you lemons, why not write a cookbook? That's just what former publishing exec Giulia Melucci has done in this lighthearted memoir about her fruitless attempts to cook her way to happily ever after.

Melucci weaves together her dating history with mirthful tales of love and loss, from her first romance (Kit, a cuddly but clueless alcoholic) to her last (Lachlan, an impotent novelist who takes off after she scores him a lucrative book deal). In your hurry to follow the story, you may be tempted to whiz past the recipes that pepper the narrative, but don't. Many of them are gems and as amusing to read as they are delicious to eat (like Lachlan's Farfalle with Zucchini and Egg). Melucci may not have found her man (yet), but her recipes are keepers.

Kimberly Y. Masibay is a Fine Cooking contributing editor.



Find more reviews and editor picks at our new Books That Cook blog at FineCooking.com.

what we're reading now

A family friend gave me my copy of *The Art of Fine Baking* by Paula Peck when I was still in high school. It may be an old (from 1961) paperback without any photos, but I was instantly captivated—and remain so—by Peck's matter-of-fact writing, which erases any fear of attempting a challenging or unfamiliar recipe (like her incredible chestnut buttercream). —Lisa Waddle





COUNTER CULTURE

Go with the Flow

What's new in kitchen faucet design. **BY DENISE MICKELSEN**

KITCHEN FAUCETS HAVE COME A LONG WAY. These days, it's not enough to spout hot or cold water on command. New models twist and turn to dispense water in any direction (even outside the sink), color the water according to its temperature, and even turn on and off with the tap of a finger. Here are a few of our favorites.

stay put

Kohler's Karbon articulated faucet, available in both sink- and wall-mount models, is jointed so it stays in the exact position you want it, either inside or outside the sink (wall mount, shown, available in polished chrome for \$1,300, and vibrant stainless for \$1,625; go to kohler.com for stores).

the ultimate

The Kizoku faucet from Swiss-based Mec Electronics AG has it all—touch technology to turn the faucet on and off and to control water flow rate, a retractable, flexible spout, LED lights to indicate water temperature, and a sleek design to boot. The Kizoku, which costs about \$1,095, isn't available in the United States, but if you have to have it, you can call Mec directly at 011-4191-835-0105 to place an order, or visit mec-ag.ch for more details.

super flex

Arwa of Switzerland's Twinflex faucet offers a flexible spout system, and the spout comes in four great colors: orange, pigeon blue, beige-gray, and black (\$950 at geminibkp.com; 520-770-0667).

soft touch

Delta's Pilar faucet boasts touch 2.0 technology, which means you can start or stop the flow of water by tapping anywhere on the handle or spout. It also sports a magnetic retractable spray head (available in polished chrome for \$337, or stainless steel for \$426 at efaucets.com).

lighten up

New from the Gessi Just Color faucet line, this model emits water lit by a concealed colored LED (water goes red for hot, purple for warm, blue for cold) without using a drop of electricity—turbines power the light as water passes through them (available in chrome for \$2,150, and satin nickel for \$2,795; call 714-808-0099 for stores).



THE GOOD LIFE

Plenty Fresh

Nutritionist **Ellie Krieger** uses fresh herbs to amp up flavor in a healthful way.

AS A NUTRITIONIST AND A BORN FOOD LOVER, I'm a walking contradiction to many people. How do I reconcile a foodie's focus on flavor and indulgence with the nutritional wisdom that I should cut back on such flavor builders as butter, cream, cheese, and bacon? Well, I don't always have to—I use healthier flavor boosters instead. Think chile peppers, ground spices, fresh aromatics like ginger and garlic, and my absolute favorites: fresh herbs.

Herbs are one of those magical ingredients that have the power to transform a dish. Not only do they add tremendous flavor, but they also infuse food with enticing aromas and beautiful color. And if that weren't enough, they're full of health-protective antioxidants and are a surprisingly rich source of vitamin A.

A Major Player While it's easy to think of herbs as a garnish or a subtle hint in a dish, I encourage you to take a new look at them as a major player. A generous dose of basil, mint, dill, or parsley can make any hum-drum green salad burst with flavor. Add fresh mint to a standard turkey sandwich, and it's like hitting the refresh button. A bunch of basil, parsley, or cilantro puréed with olive oil and a touch of lemon juice makes a vibrant salsa verde that's great for drizzling over scallops or grilled fish or meat. And heartier herbs like rosemary, thyme, and sage make terrific rubs and marinades for roasted meats and poultry.

Such herbal abundance translates well into many grain dishes, too. In traditional Middle-Eastern tabbouleh, for example, fresh, grassy flat-leaf parsley is a dominant ingredient, held aloft by robust bulgur wheat. In the same vein, I love making light, summery pastas that rely heavily on a combination of aromatic fresh herbs for flavor impact. The recipe here is a go-to summer dish for me that's simple, fresh, and full of flavor. It takes advantage of the bounty of zucchini and leaves it to the herbs to deliver the freshness of the season right to the plate—no cream or butter required.

Nutritional Wisdom That's not to say we should ban butter and other flavor standbys. I use all those ingredients in my own cooking, but strategically and in small amounts for maximum effect (a little freshly grated Parmigiano, for instance, goes a long way in this penne dish). But a liberal amount of fresh herbs sprinkled on a dish just before serving gets the job done in a way that tastes good and is good for you. That's my kind of nutritional know-how.

good to know

- Fresh herbs are full of antioxidants and vitamin A.
- Let herbs be a major player in a dish, not just a garnish—think cups, not teaspoons.
- Swap $\frac{1}{2}$ cup Parmesan sprinkled on pasta for a handful of fresh herbs, and keep the big flavor while saving about 100 calories.



For Ellie, there's big flavor in fresh herbs.

Photographs by Scott Phillips; food styling by Susan Sugarman



penne with zucchini, fresh herbs, and lemon zest

Serves 4 (serving size, 2¼ cups)

- Kosher salt
- ¾ lb. whole wheat penne
- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 medium zucchini (8 oz. each), cut in half lengthwise and sliced crosswise into ¼-inch-thick half moons
- 4 large cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- 2 tsp. finely grated lemon zest
- Freshly ground black pepper
- ¼ cup freshly grated Parmigiano-Reggiano
- 3 Tbs. coarsely chopped fresh mint

- 3 Tbs. coarsely chopped fresh basil
- 3 Tbs. coarsely chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley

Bring a large pot of well-salted water to a boil over high heat. Add the penne and cook according to package instructions until al dente. **Meanwhile**, heat the oil in a 12-inch skillet over medium-high heat. Add the zucchini and cook, stirring occasionally, until barely tender and just starting to brown, about 3 minutes. Add the garlic and cook, stirring occasionally, until the garlic is soft and fragrant, an additional

2 to 3 minutes. Remove from the heat. Stir in the lemon zest, ¾ tsp salt, and ¼ tsp. pepper.

Reserve ½ cup pasta cooking water and drain the pasta. Add the pasta to the zucchini mixture along with the Parmigiano, mint, basil, and parsley. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Toss to combine, adding some of the reserved water if necessary to moisten the pasta, and serve immediately.

Registered dietitian Ellie Krieger is a Fine Cooking contributing editor.



TEST DRIVE

Toaster Ovens

These days, the latest models do much more than toast your morning bagel. Here are our top picks for this handy countertop appliance. **BY NICKI PENDLETON WOOD**

FOR MANY, THE TOASTER OVEN bell signals that breakfast is ready. Ideal for heating morning pastries and turning out golden bagels, toaster ovens are also great for reheating, defrosting, toasting nuts, broiling, baking, and even

roasting fish fillets, chops, and chicken breasts. And depending on the job at hand, they can be more practical than a standard oven because they heat quickly, cook faster, and use less energy. Here are our favorite models.

toast points

With many models to choose from, each offering different features, there are a few things to keep in mind when shopping for a new toaster oven.

Construction Look for sturdy construction. Besides promising a longer, repair-free life, an oven with thick walls, good door fit, and smoothly operating hinges also offers heat efficiency.

Size Rather than eyeball it or buy on a hunch, measure the counter space you have and buy accordingly. Some toaster ovens have an upper and lower rack for extra vertical space, while others use the “pizza bump” (a bulge at the back of the oven) to maximize interior space but keep a modest footprint.

Function If you use your toaster oven only to toast bread and maybe melt cheese, avoid the extra features of more complex ovens.

Safety Consider models with an automatic shut-off function (that is, a timer), audible ticking, and a bell that signals the oven’s task is complete. Some models also offer a cool-to-the-touch exterior.

THE POWERHOUSE

KitchenAid countertop oven, KC01005

\$130; macys.com
Size: 18 x 10 x 11½ inches

If you’re looking for a sturdy, powerful toaster oven that can tackle any kitchen task you throw at it, this is the one for you. It doesn’t offer a lot of bells and whistles (the two rack positions are a nice feature, though), but it has reassuringly heavy construction (backed up by a one-year warranty), intuitive functioning, and a large interior space so you can cook bigger items. It heats quickly, but the heat is well controlled—a frozen pizza left in the 350°F oven for nearly 20 minutes didn’t burn. It broiled burgers and toasted nuts and bread very well.

Two rack positions



Photographs by Scott Phillips

how we tested

We tested 14 ovens, all designed primarily as toasters but capable of performing other cooking tasks such as baking and broiling. We chose ovens with small to medium footprints, without convection, and with analog dials to control the functions.

We toasted bread, browned nuts, made cheese toast, and baked croutons and frozen pizzas, all the while looking for even browning, speed, and good heat control. We also baked a small batch of cookies or homemade pretzels, broiled a burger, baked a potato, and roasted sweet potato fries.



FORM AND FUNCTION

Cuisinart toaster oven, TOB 50

\$100; cuisinart.com

Size: 16 x 9½ x 12¼ inches

This toaster oven has both looks and smarts, so to speak. The sleek, almost retro design is attractive, and it offers a spacious ½-cubic-foot interior. The smarts come from this oven's extra features and all-around good performance. It heats evenly and did a great job baking a pizza and a sweet potato, and toasting nuts. Start and stop buttons offer easy control over your cooking. A pierced metal broiler tray makes broiling meats and fish easy, and the exterior stayed cool even when the oven was blazing hot inside. The three-year warranty is another bonus. One puzzling feature: the crumb tray is removed from the back, inconvenient if the oven is pushed against a wall.

Start and stop buttons



BEST FEATURES

DeLonghi toaster oven with broiler, EO-1200B

\$60; delonghi.com

Size: 17¼ x 8¾ x 12¾ inches

This oven has a lot to offer besides the basics of toasting, baking, and broiling (in fact, toasting was probably its weakest point). There are two positions for the wire rack, and it baked crisp chicken fingers, a beautiful tray of cookies, and homemade pretzels. But its best aspect is a "pizza bump"—a pushed-out back to accommodate a 12-inch pizza—which gives the oven a bit more room inside (this model had the smallest interior of those tested). There's also a "stay-on" feature for regular baking, an automatic shut-off function so your toast doesn't burn, and a "slow bake" setting, meaning that the heat radiates gently from only the bottom heating element. It comes with a one-year warranty.

"Pizza bump"



Nicki Pendleton Wood is a cookbook editor who lives in Nashville.



DRINKS

Pleased as Punch

Perfect for warm-weather celebrations, this old-time cocktail-for-a-crowd is making a delicious comeback. **BY ST. JOHN FRIZELL**

IN THE CLASSIC WORLD WAR I FILM *Grand Illusion*, German Captain von Rauffenstein walks into the officers' mess hall, fresh from a flying mission, and says to one of his officers, "Freisler, make us one of your famous fruit punches to celebrate the downing of my twelfth plane." Freisler reads off a list of necessary ingredients to the barman as the camera pans away: "Three bottles of Moselle, two Rhine, half a bottle of Martell, three bubbly, two seltzer, pineapple..." In the next scene, two captured French airmen are offered punch from a spherical crystal bowl filled with slices of fresh fruit. War may have been hell, then as now, but at least somebody was tending bar.

The art of punch

For centuries, bowls of punch have marked special occasions, from feats of military daring to, much later, the passage of children into adulthood—your high school prom, for example. But those super-sweet candy-colored concoctions ladled out in school gymnasiums bear about as much resemblance to old-fashioned punch as a "fruit cocktail" does to a dry martini.

Punch's heyday was 18th-century England, where punch was a celebration of the breadth of the Empire, combining tea and spices from Asia with the spirits and wines of Europe and

the New World. The British probably learned the art of punch in India, where the Hindi word *panch* means five, corresponding to the traditional five ingredients of the most basic punch: strong (spirits like brandy and rum), weak (water or tea), sour (citrus), sweet (sugar), and spice (which could be just about anything else added to the mix, from nutmeg and coriander to ambergris, a musky, waxy substance harvested from sperm whales).

When the custom was imported by the American colonists, punch became the centerpiece of the tavern table, where people gathered to talk taxes and treason in the days before the Revolution. In time, punch would fall out of fashion, as the great-grandchildren of the founding fathers just didn't have the time to drink to the bottom of the bowl. They preferred the short, quick, made-to-order cocktails that took American barrooms by storm in the late 1800s. And so punch bowls were packed away on high, dusty shelves, only to be brought down for special occasions, like weddings, holidays, or high-school dances.

Life of the party

Thanks to today's history-obsessed mixologists, vintage punches are on the menu in some of the nation's hippest cocktail dens, from San Francisco to Boston, and punch



bowls have replaced speakeasy-style arm garters and turn-of-the-century bar manuals as the bartender's must-have accessory. The trend has trickled down to the amateur entertainer as well, for punch remains the most efficient and elegant way to serve a party crowd, no matter the season or occasion. For the time-strapped host of today, it's a godsend. Punch is, by necessity, prepared in advance, allowing the host to cook or decorate in the hours before a party. Guests can serve themselves, eliminating the need for a bartender. Most important, a well-made punch appeals to everyone. It's not too strong, not too sweet, and after an initial sip, those tipplers who instinctively reach for wine, Champagne, or vodka-soda highballs will likely compete to drain the bowl dry.

Last, there's something grand and romantic about punch; the sight of the flowing bowl marks an occasion as special indeed. In his 1939 book, *The Gentleman's Companion*, the American writer and world-traveler Charles H. Baker Jr. recorded drink recipes from three trips around the world, including punch recipes from San Salvador, Vienna, Punjab, and Santiago de Cuba. He wrote: "Few things in life are more kind to man's eye than the sight of a gracefully conceived punch bowl... enmeshing every beam of light, and tossing it back into a thousand shattered spectra to remind us of the willing cheer within." Through the centuries of war and peace, that light has not dimmed.

St. John Frizell is a freelance writer and bartender. He lives in Brooklyn, New York.

punch rules

Charles H. Baker Jr., an American food, drink, and travel writer, proposed a "few—but inflexible" rules for punch makers, which are as apt today as they were in 1930s, when he wrote them.

- **Wait for it.** Add sparkling wine, sparkling water, or any other bubbly beverage to your punch just before serving. "The whole object to a sparkling punch is to have it sparkle."
- **Chill out.** Use big blocks of ice, not small cubes. Cubes melt quickly and "dilution beyond a certain point courts sure disaster." **Making ice blocks is simple:** fill metal bowls or cake pans with water and freeze them overnight. To unmold, briefly dip the bottom of the bowl or pan into warm water to release the ice.
- **Plan ahead.** Chill all of the punch ingredients at least a few hours before adding them to your punch bowl. "Pouring room temperature liquids on any sort of ice is a withering shock to the ice itself." If possible, chill the punch bowl too, either in the refrigerator or with bags of ice.

st. cecilia society punch

This punch is named for a famously private and exclusive social organization founded in Charleston, South Carolina, in the 18th century. The recipe can easily be doubled.

Serves 6 to 8

- 2 medium lemons, thinly sliced
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup brandy
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup granulated sugar
- 2 tea bags green tea
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup dark rum, such as Gosling's
- $\frac{1}{2}$ small pineapple, peeled, cored, sliced $\frac{1}{2}$ inch thick, and cut into small wedges
- 1 750-ml bottle dry sparkling wine, such as Domaine Ste. Michelle Brut, chilled
- 6 cups sparkling water, chilled

Put the lemon slices in a large bowl and pour the brandy over them. Let macerate at room temperature overnight.

In a small saucepan, combine the sugar with $\frac{3}{4}$ cup water and bring to a boil over high heat. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the sugar dissolves, 2 to 3 minutes. Remove from the heat, add the tea bags, and steep for 2 to 3 minutes. Discard the tea bags and let the syrup cool.

At least 3 hours and up to 6 hours before serving, combine the lemons, brandy, syrup, rum, and pineapple in a large pitcher or bowl. Chill in the refrigerator.

Just before serving, pour the punch into a large chilled punch bowl with a block of ice. Add the sparkling wine and sparkling water, and gently stir.

tenant's harbor punch

This punch is named for a quiet, windswept point on the rocky coast of Maine. I made this punch there for the summer wedding of two friends. The caraway-flavored aquavit was made in Norway, near the bride's hometown.

Serves 10 to 12

- 4-5 medium lemons
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup granulated sugar
- 3 750-ml bottles off-dry white wine (such as Riesling Spatlese, Vouvray, or Chenin Blanc), chilled
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups aquavit, preferably Norwegian, such as Linie, chilled
- 2 pints fresh strawberries, hulled and halved
- 1 English cucumber, washed and sliced about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick
- 4 cups sparkling water, chilled

Using a peeler, remove the zest from the lemons, avoiding the white pith. In a medium bowl, combine the lemon zest and the sugar, stirring with a wooden spoon until the sugar is fragrant and has the texture of soft, fresh snow, about 10 minutes. Add $\frac{3}{4}$ cup boiling water to the bowl and stir to dissolve the sugar. Strain the syrup and let cool.

Juice the lemons and strain the juice—you'll need 1 cup plus 2 Tbs. juice.

At least 3 hours and up to 6 hours before serving, combine the syrup, lemon juice, wine, aquavit, strawberries, and cucumbers in a large bowl or pot. Chill in the refrigerator.

Just before serving, pour the punch into a large chilled punch bowl or dispenser, with a block of ice. Add the sparkling water and gently stir.







spill the beans

Go green (and yellow and purple). Now is when summer beans of all colors are at their crispest, sweetest best. BY MARIA HELM SINSKEY



BEANS ARE AN ESSENTIAL on my summer table. Versatile enough to roast, sauté, or braise, they also shine with just a quick boil or steam, a slick of butter, and a sprinkle of salt. And although you can find them in the market year-round, eaten at the start of their season (right now), green beans of all varieties and colors are smaller, sweeter, and more velvety than they'll be all year. So go ahead and give in to those piled-high bushel baskets at farmers' markets. Here's a handful of delicious ways to get them on your table.

A World of Beans

"Green bean" is a generic term used for the skinny, long green beans almost universally available canned, frozen, and fresh. But the world of beans is much wider (and more colorful), as a trip to a farmers' market will attest. The five bean varieties used in these recipes have subtly different textures, colors, and tastes but can all be used interchangeably.

1. Green, string, wax, or snap beans: Long and rounded, these are most often bright green but also come in yellow and purple. The fibrous string that was once their trademark has been bred out of them, although you'll still find it in some heirloom varieties.

2. French green beans, haricots verts, or filet beans: These delicate, very thin beans come in green and yellow. Picked at their peak, they are the crème de la crème of beans, and priced accordingly.

3. Romano beans: Flat and wide, Romanos can be green or yellow. When young and short, they're

tender, but they are often sold larger (as long as 6 inches), with visible bean seeds, at which point they need to be cooked longer.

4. Spanish Musica beans: Flat, green, and meaty, these look similar to Romanos but have a delicate nutty flavor.

5. Chinese long beans or yard-long beans: These giants belong to a completely different branch of the bean family. They are the immature pods of a variety of cowpea (an African bean variety that includes the black-eyed pea). These can grow to great lengths but are best between 12 and 18 inches. Similar in flavor to the string bean, these are softer and starchier.

roasted romanos and tomatoes with tapenade

Serves 4 to 6

Kosher salt

$\frac{3}{4}$ lb. green or yellow Romano beans, trimmed and cut into 2-inch lengths (3 cups)

2 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil

Freshly ground black pepper

1½ cups assorted-color cherry tomatoes

1 tsp. minced garlic

1 tsp. fresh thyme leaves

1 recipe Easy Tapenade (below)

Bring a large pot of well-salted water to a boil. Cook the beans in the water until crisp-tender, 4 to 6 minutes. Drain and run under cold water to cool. Drain well.

Position a rack in the center of the oven and heat the oven to 425°F. Put the beans in a medium bowl, toss with 1 Tbs. of the olive oil, and season with $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. salt and a few grinds of pepper. Spread the beans in one layer on a heavy-duty rimmed baking sheet, leaving space for the tomatoes.

In a small bowl, toss the tomatoes with the remaining 1 Tbs. oil, garlic, thyme, $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. salt, and a few grinds of pepper. Spread the tomatoes on the baking sheet.

Roast the beans and tomatoes just until the tomatoes start to split, 7 to 10 minutes. Slide the beans onto a serving dish, top with the tomatoes, and dot liberally with the tapenade. Serve, with additional tapenade on the side.

EASY TAPENADE

Extra tapenade is delicious on crostini or spread on sandwiches.

Yields 1 scant cup

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup pitted Niçoise or Kalamata olives

2 Tbs. fresh lime juice

2 anchovy fillets, rinsed

1 medium shallot, quartered and peeled

1 large clove garlic, quartered and peeled

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup extra-virgin olive oil

3 Tbs. finely chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

Put the olives, lime juice, anchovies, shallot, and garlic in a food processor and process until smooth, about 20 seconds. With the machine running, slowly add the olive oil through the feed tube and process until you have a smooth paste. Stir in the parsley and season to taste with salt and pepper.



spicy shrimp with ginger-garlic long beans

Scissors make snipping the beans into 4-inch lengths a breeze. Use plain sesame oil, not toasted.

Serves 4

- 1 lb. extra-large (16 to 20 per lb.) shrimp, peeled and deveined**
- ¼ cup mirin (sweetened rice wine)**
- 2 Tbs. soy sauce**
- 1 large scallion, thinly sliced (both white and green parts)**
- ¼ tsp. crushed red pepper flakes**
- 2 Tbs. untoasted Asian sesame oil**
- 2 tsp. minced garlic**
- 2 tsp. minced fresh ginger**
- ½ lb. Chinese long beans, trimmed and cut into 4-inch lengths**

In a nonreactive medium bowl, combine the shrimp, mirin, soy sauce, scallion, and red pepper flakes. Marinate in the refrigerator for at least 1 hour and up to 6 hours.

Heat a 12-inch skillet over medium-high heat. Add the sesame oil and then the garlic and ginger, and cook, stirring, until the garlic begins to color, about 10 seconds. Add the beans and stir quickly to coat with the garlic and ginger. Continue to cook, stirring, until the beans start to turn bright green, 1 to 2 minutes. (If the garlic starts to burn, remove the pan from the heat and continue to stir quickly.)

Add the shrimp and the marinade (the liquid hitting the hot pan will create steam, so be careful). Cook, stirring constantly, until the juices have reduced and thickened slightly and the shrimp are pink and curled, an additional 3 to 4 minutes. Serve immediately.



Shop and Store

Avoid buying beans that look withered at either end—it means they've been sitting a while and are losing moisture. Beans relinquish sweetness the longer they're stored, so try to use them right away. If you can't, store them in the refrigerator for up to four days in a paper bag or a plastic bag with holes punched in it so the beans can breathe.



summer bean confetti salad with pickled red onion vinaigrette

Use a selection of beans for this salad. The colors, shapes, and textures will make it interesting and delicious.

Serves 4

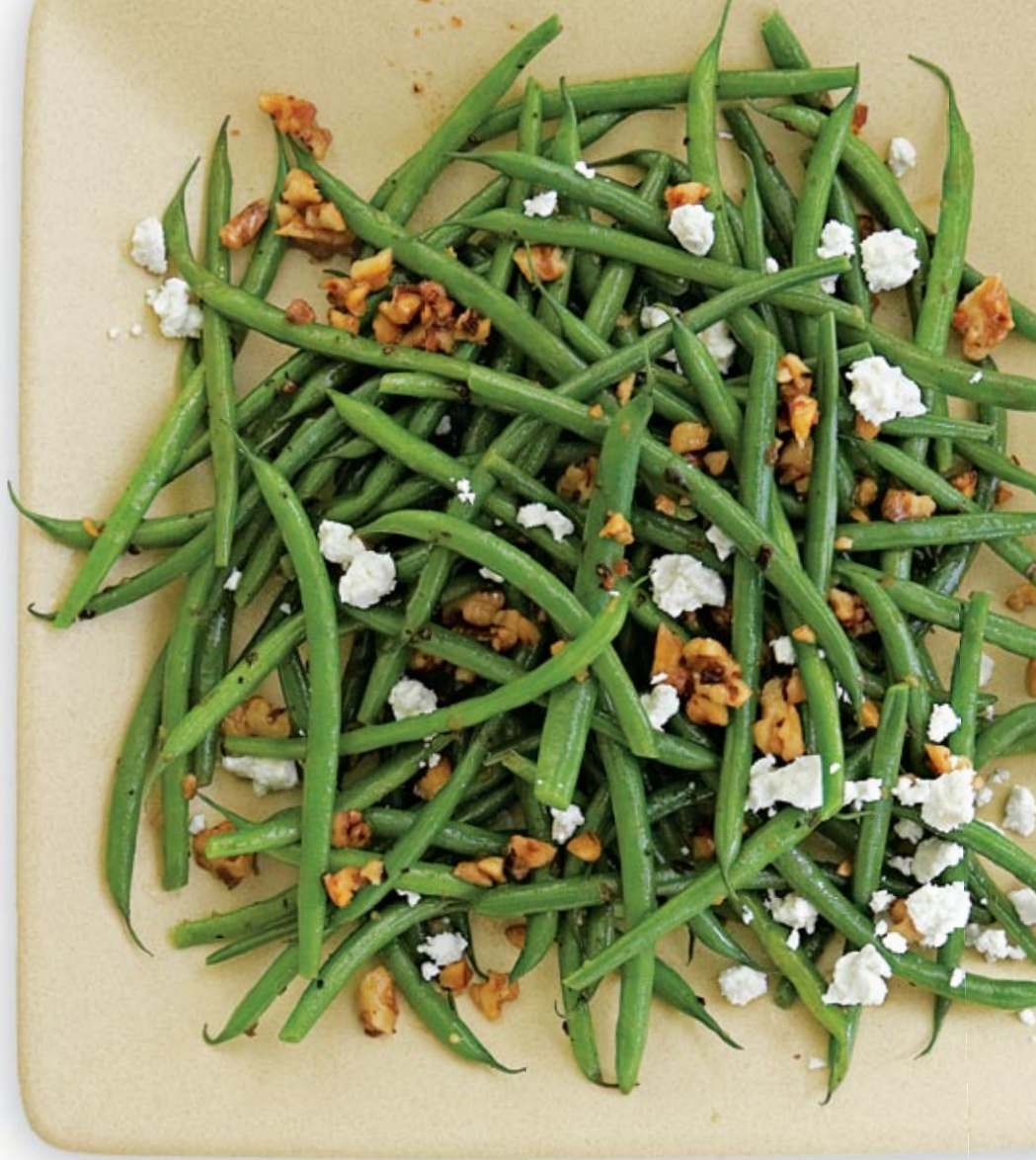
Kosher salt

- ¾ lb. beans, assorted sizes and varieties, trimmed and cut into 1- to 2-inch lengths (3 cups)**
- ¼ cup red wine vinegar**
- 2 tsp. granulated sugar**
- ½ cup thinly sliced red onion**
- 1 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil**
- ¼ cup loosely packed torn fresh basil**
- ¼ cup pine nuts, toasted (optional)**
- Freshly ground black pepper**

Bring a medium pot of well-salted water to a boil. Cook the beans in the water until crisp-tender (cooking times of different types of beans will vary, so cook each variety separately). Drain and run under cold water to cool. Drain well and put the beans in a serving bowl.

In a small, nonreactive saucepan, combine the vinegar, sugar, and 1 tsp. salt. Bring the mixture to a boil over medium-high heat. Add the onion, return to a boil, and immediately pour the mixture into a non-reactive bowl to cool, about 15 minutes. Drain the onion and reserve the vinegar.

Toss the onion with the beans, add 1 Tbs. of the vinegar and the olive oil. Add the basil and pine nuts (if using), season to taste with salt and pepper and toss again. Add more of the vinegar if you'd like a little more tang.



haricots verts with toasted walnuts and chèvre

If you love goat cheese, feel free to add more to this simple dish.

Serves 4

Kosher salt

- ¾ lb. haricots verts (green, yellow, or both), trimmed**
- 1 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil**
- 2 Tbs. minced shallots**
- ¼ cup walnuts, lightly toasted and chopped**
- 2 tsp. walnut oil**
- Freshly ground black pepper**
- 2 oz. fresh goat cheese, crumbled (¾ cup)**

Bring a medium pot of well-salted water to a boil. Cook the beans in the water until tender, 2 to 3 minutes. Drain and run under cold water to cool. Drain well.

Heat the olive oil in a 12-inch skillet over medium-high heat. Add the shallots and cook, stirring, until they begin to brown, about 30 seconds. Stir in the walnuts. Add the walnut oil and the beans and cook, stirring to heat through, 2 to 3 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper and transfer the beans to a serving dish. Sprinkle the goat cheese over the top and serve.



Get buying, storing, and prepping tips for hundreds more ingredients at [FineCooking.com/ingredients](https://www.finecooking.com/ingredients).



green beans with smoked paprika and almonds

If you don't like spicy heat, use sweet pimentón instead.

Serves 4

Kosher salt

- ¾ lb. green beans, preferably Spanish Musica, trimmed and cut on the diagonal into 2-inch lengths (3 cups)**
- ½ cup thinly sliced shallots (about 2 medium)**
- 1 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil**
- 1½ tsp. granulated sugar**
- ½ cup coarsely chopped Marcona almonds**
- ¼ tsp. hot Spanish smoked paprika (pimentón de la Vera)**

Bring a large pot of well-salted water to a boil. Cook the beans in the water until just tender, 4 to 5 minutes. Drain and run under cold water to cool. Drain well.

Put the shallots and olive oil in a cold 12-inch skillet and set the pan over medium-high heat. Cook until the shallots begin to turn golden, stirring to break them into rings, about 2 minutes. Sprinkle the sugar over the shallots and stir constantly until they are golden all over, about 45 seconds. Add the almonds, stir well, and immediately add the beans and smoked paprika. Cook, stirring, until heated through, 2 to 3 minutes. Season to taste with salt and serve.

fusilli with green beans, pancetta, and parmigiano

The pasta's cooking water melts the cheese and turns it into a rich sauce that coats the beans and pulls everything together. If you can't find pancetta, substitute bacon.

Serves 2 to 3

Kosher salt

- ½ lb. fusilli or other twisted pasta**
- 4 oz. pancetta, sliced ¼ inch thick and cut into ½-inch squares (¾ cup)**
- 1 large clove garlic, smashed and peeled**
- ½ lb. green beans, trimmed and cut into 1-inch lengths (2 cups)**
- Freshly ground black pepper**
- 2 Tbs. unsalted butter, at room temperature**
- 2 oz. finely grated Parmigiano-Reggiano (1 cup)**

Bring a medium pot of well-salted water to a boil. Cook the pasta until just barely al dente, about 1 minute less than package timing. Reserve 1 cup of the cooking water, and drain the pasta.

While the pasta cooks, put the pancetta in a cold 10-inch skillet and set over medium-high heat. When the pancetta starts sizzling, add the garlic and cook, stirring constantly, until starting to brown, 1 minute. Reduce the heat to medium and continue to cook the pancetta until golden but still chewy at the center (taste a piece if you're not sure), an additional 2 to 3 minutes. If the pancetta has rendered a lot of its fat, spoon off all but 1 Tbs. of the fat from the pan.

Add the beans to the pan and cook, stirring constantly, until they're crisp-tender, 3 to 4 minutes. Remove the garlic and season the beans with salt and pepper. With the pan still over medium heat, add the pasta, ½ cup of the pasta water, and the butter. Toss to combine. Add another ¼ cup pasta water and ¾ cup of the Parmigiano. Stir well and season to taste with salt and pepper. If necessary, add a little more pasta water to loosen the sauce.

Transfer the pasta to a serving bowl. Grind black pepper over the top and sprinkle with the remaining cheese.

Maria Helm Sinskey is culinary director at Robert Sinskey Vineyards, the Napa Valley winery she owns with her husband, Robert. ■

Bean Basics: Prep and Cook

Green beans need just a quick rinse in a colander. Snap or cut off the stem end, which tends to be tough. (You can cut off the tails as well, although it's not necessary.) Note that beans react quickly to acidity, losing their bright color when you season them with lemon or vinegar. You can use the following cooking methods for all types of green beans.

Blanch: Immersing beans in a pot of salted water briefly and then removing them to a cold water bath sets their color and brings out their sweetness. I like to do this even if I plan to sauté or stir-fry them, especially with the meatier varieties, as they'll cook faster. The more delicate, thinner varieties (like haricots verts) need only a quick blanch before being tossed into salads or side dishes.

Steam: Cooking beans in water vapor in a closed vessel is the fastest method and doesn't leach out flavor or nutrients, as boiling can. Foods steam best in shallow layers, though, so unless you want to work in batches, you're better off boiling large amounts of beans.

Boil: All these beans taste delicious boiled in salted water until tender and served with butter or olive oil, a squeeze of lemon, and finished with a sprinkle of sea salt. Boiling softens vegetables faster and more thoroughly than steaming, because contact with hot water dissolves and extracts pectin and calcium from the plant's cells.



Scooped!

One easy method, countless incredible ice creams. **BY DAVID LEBOVITZ**

UNLIKE A LOT OF OTHER DESSERTS, ice cream isn't one of the fussy ones. You start by making a basic custard and then you can steer off in many delicious directions to flavor your ice cream any way you like it.

The custard recipe is simple: egg yolks stirred over low heat with milk, sugar, and some cream. After cooking until silky smooth and slightly thickened, the custard gets strained into heavy cream and then chilled before churning.

The best part is choosing your flavors—and there are several options to consider along

the way. First, you might infuse flavor into the custard. Tea, fresh ginger, coffee, citrus zest, and vanilla bean are all possibilities. After that, you can make additions to the cooked custard, including chocolate, berries, liquor, or even olive oil. Finally, after your ice cream is churned, you can mix in any variety of ingredients, from bite-size bits of candy and chocolate to chunks of cake or brownies. Try using any of the suggestions on pages 52–53, or be creative and make up your own flavors. Don't laugh, but once I even put bacon in a batch—it was a surprise hit!



Triple-decker

Strawberry Pound Cake, Double Ginger, and Rocky Road make for a new take on Neapolitan. Turn to pages 52–53 for more flavor options.

STEP 1

CHOOSE YOUR INGREDIENTS

Read the method from start to finish and then choose your flavors and prep all of your ingredients.

Yields about 1 quart

STEP 2 MASTER RECIPE

MAKE THE CUSTARD

Use this basic custard recipe as the starting point for all ice creams.

- 2 cups heavy cream**
- 1 cup whole milk**
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup granulated sugar**
- Table salt**
- 5 large egg yolks**

In a medium saucepan, mix 1 cup of the cream with the milk, sugar, and a pinch of salt. Warm the cream mixture over medium-high heat, stirring occasionally, until the sugar dissolves and tiny bubbles begin to form around the edge of the pan, 3 to 4 minutes.

To infuse a flavor (option 1), stir in your selection from the ingredient choices below. Cover, remove from the heat, and let sit for

Flavor Your Ice Cream

You have the option of flavoring the ice cream custard at two different steps:

INFUSE it at the beginning of cooking or **ADD** flavors at the end of cooking. You can do just one or both.

OPTION 1:

Infuse

Choose one or two of these ingredients and add before warming the cream mixture.



Vanilla: 1 vanilla bean, split lengthwise and seeds scraped out (use both the split bean and seeds)



Lemon: Finely grated zest of 4 medium lemons



Tea: $\frac{1}{4}$ cup loose black tea leaves, such as jasmine, Earl Grey, or English breakfast



Orange: Finely grated zest of 4 medium oranges



Lavender: 2 Tbs. dried lavender



Coffee: $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups coarsely crushed medium-roast coffee beans (seal the beans in a large zip-top bag and crush with a rolling pin or meat mallet)



Fresh herbs (basil, mint): 1 cup tightly packed, coarsely torn leaves



Toasted nuts (hazelnuts, pistachios, almonds, peanuts, etc.): $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups coarsely crushed



Ginger: $\frac{1}{2}$ cup peeled, thinly sliced fresh ginger



Pepper: 1 Tbs. black peppercorns, very coarsely ground



Cinnamon: Two 3- to 4-inch sticks (broken into large pieces)

1 hour. Taste and let sit longer if you want a stronger flavor. If not infusing, proceed with the recipe.

Prepare an ice bath by filling a large bowl with several inches of ice water. Set a smaller metal bowl (one that holds at least 1½ quarts) in the ice water. Pour the remaining cup of cream into the inner bowl (this helps the custard cool quicker when you pour it in later). Set a fine strainer on top. Whisk the egg yolks in a medium bowl.

If you have infused the cream mixture, re-warm it over medium-high heat until tiny

bubbles begin to form around the edge of the pan, 1 to 2 minutes. In a steady stream, pour half of the warm cream mixture into the egg yolks, whisking constantly to prevent the eggs from curdling.

Pour the egg mixture back into the saucepan and cook over low heat, stirring constantly and scraping the bottom with a heatproof cooking spoon or rubber spatula until the custard thickens slightly (it should be thick enough to coat the utensil and hold a line drawn through it with a finger; see p. 83 for details), 4 to 8 minutes. An instant-read ther-

момeter should read 175° to 180°F at this point. Don't let the sauce overheat or boil, or it will curdle. Immediately strain the custard into the cold cream in the ice bath. If using an infusion ingredient, press firmly in the strainer with the spoon or spatula to extract as much flavor as possible. If you want to **add** melted chocolate and cocoa (see below), do so now. **Cool the custard** to below 70°F by stirring it over the ice bath. To **add** a flavor other than chocolate (see the **option 2** choices below), stir it into the cooled custard.

OPTION 2:

Add

Choose one or two of these ingredients and add after straining and cooling the cooked custard. (The exceptions are cocoa and chocolate, which should be added to the warm custard, or they will seize.)



Peach: 1½ lb. fresh (or 1½ lb. frozen) peaches, peeled, pitted, cooked to soften, and puréed



Mascarpone: 1 cup mascarpone



Raspberry: 12 oz. fresh or frozen raspberries, puréed, strained, and mixed with ½ cup sugar



Vanilla: 2 tsp. pure vanilla extract



Olive oil: ¼ cup fruity extra-virgin olive oil



Chocolate: 4 oz. bittersweet chocolate (at least 60% cacao), chopped and melted, plus ¼ cup Dutch-process cocoa



Lemon: ¼ cup strained fresh lemon juice



Orange: ¾ cup strained fresh orange juice



Liqueur/liquor: 3 to 4 Tbs. Grand Marnier, Cognac, Baileys, Frangelico, Kahlúa, amaretto, Armagnac, whiskey, rum, etc.



Strawberry: 1 lb. fresh or frozen strawberries, trimmed, puréed, strained, and mixed with ½ cup sugar



Passionfruit: ¼ cup passionfruit concentrate (see Where to Buy It, p. 89)

Double Down

Some flavors can be both infused and added. To double the flavor of citrus ice cream, for example, start by infusing the cream mixture

with zest and add fresh juice to the custard. And for a stronger hit of vanilla, add extract to custard already infused with vanilla bean.

STEP 3

CHILL AND FREEZE THE CUSTARD

Refrigerate the custard until completely chilled, at least 4 hours. Then freeze the custard in your ice cream maker according to the manufacturer's instructions. If using **mix-ins** from the list at right, fold them into the just-churned ice cream. Transfer the ice cream to an air-tight container and freeze solid for at least 4 hours.

Ice Cream Tips

How to swirl

To swirl an ingredient like jam or Nutella into ice cream, let the swirling ingredient come to room temperature first. With a spoon, drop it in small dollops between layers of just-churned ice cream as you remove it from the machine. Gently drag a spatula to swirl the ingredient as best you can; to keep the swirls distinct, avoid vigorous stirring.

Fresh fruit rule

Resist the temptation to mix whole fresh berries or other fresh fruit chunks into your ice cream. Because they have a high water content, they're likely to freeze into hard, icy chunks.

How long to freeze

You can store ice cream in the freezer for up to two weeks; however, because homemade ice cream doesn't have any stabilizers, it's best eaten within a couple of days of making it.

No machine, no problem

If you don't have an ice cream maker, you can freeze the custard in a bowl in the freezer. Check after about an hour; once it starts freezing, blitz through it with a hand-held electric mixer and then return it to the freezer. Repeat every so often as the mixture is freezing, until the ice cream is completely whipped and frozen.

Mix In

Choose up to three ingredients for a total of up to 1 cup (optional).



Mini marshmallows
or Marshmallow Fluff



Chocolate-covered coffee beans



Dried fruit (raisins, prunes, etc.), soaked in warm liqueur, liquor, or water until plumped



Crushed candy bars



Jam or marmalade



Crushed cookies



Chopped crystallized ginger (no more than ½ cup)



Chopped chocolate (no more than 6 Tbs.)



Nutella



Chunks of gingerbread, pound cake, brownies, or quick breads



Crushed peppermint candy or peppermint patties



Toasted nuts, chopped if large



Simple sundae

Scoop your favorite flavors, sprinkle on some chopped toasted nuts and chocolate, and top with a dollop of whipped cream.



What's the Scoop?

These are only some of the amazing flavor combinations you can create with this simple technique.



Hazelnut Chocolate Chunk

Infuse: Toasted hazelnuts
Mix in: Chopped chocolate



Passionfruit Macadamia

Add: Passionfruit concentrate
Mix in: Toasted macadamias



Whiskey Gingerbread

Add: Whiskey
Mix in: Gingerbread chunks



Raspberry Chambord

Add: Raspberry and Chambord



Olive Oil Pine Nut

Add: Olive oil
Mix in: Toasted pine nuts



Lavender Vanilla

Infuse: Lavender
Add: Pure vanilla extract



Double Vanilla Bourbon

Infuse: Vanilla bean
Add: Pure vanilla extract and bourbon



Rocky Road

Add: Chocolate
Mix in: Marshmallows or Fluff, toasted nuts, and chopped chocolate



Strawberry Pound Cake

Add: Strawberry
Mix in: Pound cake chunks

David Lebovitz is a pastry chef, cooking teacher, and cookbook author. His latest book is The Sweet Life in Paris: Delicious Adventures in the World's Most Glorious and Perplexing City. He also writes a popular blog at davidlebovitz.com. ■



Peach Mascarpone
Add: Peach and mascarpone



Strawberry Basil
Infuse: Basil
Add: Strawberry



Irish Coffee
Infuse: Coffee
Add: Baileys



Rum Raisin
Add: Rum
Mix in: Raisins soaked in rum



Chocolate Peppermint Stick
Add: Chocolate
Mix in: Crushed peppermint sticks



Cinnamon Pecan
Infuse: Cinnamon
Mix in: Toasted pecans



Orange Earl Grey
Infuse: Orange zest and Earl Grey tea



Double Ginger
Infuse: Fresh ginger
Mix in: Chopped crystallized ginger



Armagnac Prune
Add: Armagnac
Mix in: Prunes soaked in Armagnac



Enter the Create Your Own Ice Cream Challenge at FineCooking.com, and you could win a Cuisinart ice cream maker.



1. SEASON

Apply a dry rub before cooking for an initial layer of flavor.



2. SEAR

Grill over the hottest part of the fire to create a flavorful browned crust.

A NEW WAY TO GRILL Barbecue-Braising

Season, sear, braise, and glaze your way to slow-cooked flavor from the grill. **BY BRUCE AIDELLS**

COME SUMMER, not many cooks are thinking pot roast or short ribs. Who wants to heat up the kitchen? I don't. But I don't want to take a

three-month pass on slow-cooked dishes, either. So I solved the problem by taking it outside. I call this new cooking method barbecue-braising.



3. BRAISE

Move the meat to a covered pot on the cooler section of the grill so it cooks slowly and becomes infused with flavors from the braising liquid.



4. GLAZE

Quickly brown the tender meat over the hottest part of the grill to caramelize the glaze for a final layer of flavor.

Why braise on the barbecue? For the most part, you probably use your grill to quickly cook steaks, burgers, and chicken breasts over high heat. But the grill is great for braising, too. Traditionally, meat is braised by browning it in a Dutch oven, adding a flavorful liquid and aromatics, and cooking it slowly for several hours on the stovetop or in the oven until it's meltingly tender. (I actually prefer the oven method, since the heat source is more even.)

When barbecue-braising, the grill performs like an oven: You just put your pot on the grill, cover, and let the meat simmer for several hours. But with this method, you have two advantages over the indoor technique. First, before braising, you can brown the meat directly on the grill, which adds extra flavor. And after braising, you can brush the cooked meat with a tasty glaze (a part of each of these recipes) and finish it directly over the fire. The result: delicious, saucy, fall-off-the-bone meat.



barbecue-braised country spareribs with beer and mustard glaze

For this recipe, the German dark lager called bock beer is my top choice, but any dark lager works well. Serve with boiled new potatoes or potato salad.

Serves 4 to 6

FOR THE RIBS

- 1 Tbs. sweet Hungarian paprika
- 1 tsp. dark brown sugar
- 1 tsp. dry mustard (preferably Coleman's)
- 1 tsp. dried sage
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 3 lb. bone-in country style pork ribs (see Test Kitchen, p. 81, for more information)

FOR THE BRAISING LIQUID

- 4 strips bacon, cut crosswise into ½-inch-wide strips
- 2 medium yellow onions, thinly sliced (3 cups)
- 4 medium cloves garlic, chopped (1 Tbs.)
- 1 medium carrot, chopped (½ cup)
- 2 cups lower-salt chicken broth
- 1 12-oz. bottle bock beer or dark lager
- ¼ cup cider vinegar
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 tsp. caraway seeds

FOR THE GLAZE

- ¼ cup Dijon mustard
- ¼ cup light brown sugar
- ¼ tsp. Worcestershire sauce

SEASON In a small bowl, combine the paprika, brown sugar, dry mustard, sage, 1 tsp. salt, and 1 tsp. pepper. Set aside 2 tsp. to use in the braise and sprinkle the remaining rub all over the ribs. Cover and refrigerate for at least 2 hours but preferably overnight.

SEAR Prepare a gas grill for direct grilling over medium-high heat (see Grill Skills, p. 58). Grill the ribs until nicely browned, 3 to 5 minutes per side. Transfer to a platter, let cool briefly, and then tie each rib with 3 or 4 loops of butcher's twine.

BRAISE Prepare the grill for indirect grilling (see Grill Skills, p. 58). In an 8-quart heavy-duty pot, cook the bacon over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until it just starts to crisp, 2 to 3 minutes. Add the onions and cook, stirring occasionally, until soft and beginning to color, 6 to 8 minutes. Add the garlic, carrot, and the reserved spice rub and cook for about 1 minute more. Add the broth, beer, vinegar, bay leaves, and caraway seeds. Bring

to a boil, reduce the heat, and simmer, uncovered, for 10 minutes.

Nestle the ribs into the braising liquid. Set the pot on the grill over the cool zone. Cover the pot, close the grill lid, and cook until fork-tender, about 1½ hours, turning the ribs halfway through cooking.

Transfer the ribs to a tray. Strain the braising liquid into a heatproof vessel, such as a Pyrex measuring cup, and let sit until the fat rises to the top. Discard the solids. Skim off and discard the fat. Keep warm.

GLAZE Prepare the grill for direct grilling over medium-low heat (see Grill Skills, p. 58). In a small bowl, stir the mustard, brown sugar, and Worcestershire sauce. Stir in just enough of the braising liquid, 1 Tbs. at a time, to produce a glaze thin enough to easily brush on the ribs. Brush one side of the ribs with the glaze and grill glazed side down until bubbly and beginning to darken, 3 to 5 minutes. Brush the other side, flip the ribs, and grill until the glaze is bubbly and beginning to darken, an additional 3 to 5 minutes.

Remove the string from the ribs, put them on a warm platter, and drizzle with the remaining braising liquid.

barbecue-braised thai chicken legs with lemongrass glaze

Lemongrass adds a wonderful fragrance to this dish. To prepare it, trim off the tops and enough of the bottoms that you no longer see a woody core and then remove the tough outer leaves. Thinly slice the remaining light-green stalks crosswise and then finely chop them.

Serves 6

FOR THE CHICKEN

- 2 tsp. ground turmeric
- 1 tsp. minced fresh ginger
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. ground coriander
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. cayenne
- Kosher salt
- 6 whole skin-on chicken legs

FOR THE BRAISING LIQUID AND GLAZE

- 2 tsp. peanut oil
- 1 cup finely chopped scallions (white and light-green parts only)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup finely chopped lemongrass (1 to 2 large or 3 medium stalks)
- 1 Tbs. minced garlic
- 2 tsp. minced fresh ginger
- 1 Tbs. Thai green curry paste
- 3 cups lower-salt chicken broth
- 2 Tbs. Asian fish sauce
- 1 Tbs. granulated sugar
- Kosher salt

FOR SERVING

- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups Thai jasmine rice, cooked

SEASON In a small bowl, combine the turmeric, ginger, coriander, cayenne, and 1 tsp. salt. Rub all over the chicken legs. Cover and refrigerate for at least 2 hours but preferably overnight.

SEAR Prepare a gas grill for direct grilling over medium heat (see Grill Skills, p. 58). Grill the legs until they begin to brown on both sides, 3 to 5 minutes per side (watch carefully for flare-ups). Set aside.

BRAISE Prepare the grill for indirect grilling (see Grill Skills, p. 58). In an 8-quart heavy-duty pot, heat the oil over medium heat. Add the scallions and stir for 1 minute. Add the lemongrass and stir for 1 minute. Add the garlic and ginger and stir for 1 minute. Stir in the curry paste until the vegetables are evenly coated. Add the broth, fish sauce, and sugar and bring to a boil. Remove from the heat.

Nestle the chicken legs into the braising liquid. Set the pot on the grill over the cool zone. Cover the pot, close the grill lid, and cook until the legs are tender, about 30 minutes. Transfer the chicken to a tray.

Pour the braising liquid into a heatproof vessel, such as a Pyrex measuring cup, and let sit until the fat rises to the top. Skim off and discard the fat.

GLAZE Prepare the grill for direct grilling over medium heat (see Grill Skills, p. 58). Strain enough of the braising liquid to yield 1 cup and boil over medium heat in a small saucepan until reduced to $\frac{1}{4}$ cup glaze, about 15 minutes. (Return the strained solids to the remaining cooking liquid).

Brush some of the glaze over one side of each chicken leg and grill glazed side down until the glaze begins to color, 2 to 3 minutes. Brush the other side of the legs with glaze and flip them over—the skin may stick to the grill a bit, so gently pry up any stuck areas before you flip. Grill until browned on the second side, 2 to 3 minutes.

To serve, reheat the remaining cooking liquid if necessary and season to taste with salt. Put some rice in each of 6 serving bowls, lean a leg against the rice, and ladle in some of the cooking liquid.



Grill Skills

A gas grill is best for barbecue-braising, because it's easy to control the grill's heat level for the two grilling techniques this method requires—direct and indirect.

If you consider yourself a fire master, though, you can make all these recipes on a charcoal grill. It takes a bit more attention and effort to maintain the fire, but cooking over charcoal delivers a nice, smoky flavor. Go to FineCooking.com/extras for instructions on how to set up your charcoal grill for this method.

Here's how to set up your gas grill to use direct heat for the initial sear and final glaze and indirect heat for the long braise.

Direct grilling means cooking food directly over the heat source. Turn on all the burners, setting them at the level indicated in the recipe, and let the grill heat for 10 to 15 minutes.

Indirect grilling means the heat source is around, but not directly under, the food. Turn all but one of the burners on medium heat. For a three-burner grill, leave the center burner off. Set an oven or grill thermometer (see Test Kitchen, p. 81) on the grate above the unlit burner and close the lid. Let it heat for about 10 minutes. Adjust the temperature of the burners as necessary until the thermometer reads 350°F. When ready, set the pot over the unlit burner.

barbecue-braised moroccan lamb shanks with honey-mint glaze

Sweet and savory flavors—a hallmark of Moroccan food—combine in this dish. The vegetables and lamb are served over couscous. For more on harissa, including a recipe, see Test Kitchen, p. 81.

Serves 4

FOR THE LAMB

- 1 Tbs. sweet paprika
- 1 tsp. ground ginger
- 1 tsp. turmeric
- 1 tsp. cayenne
- 1 tsp. dried mint
- ½ tsp. ground coriander
- ½ tsp. ground cumin
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 4 meaty lamb shanks, trimmed (about 1 lb. each)

FOR THE BRAISING LIQUID

- 3 cups chopped yellow onion
- 1 cup chopped canned tomatoes
- ¼ cup finely chopped cilantro stems (save leaves for garnish)
- 2 Tbs. fresh lemon juice; more to taste
- 1 Tbs. chopped garlic
- Kosher salt
- 4 carrots, peeled and cut into 2-inch lengths, thicker pieces split lengthwise
- 2 medium purple turnips, peeled and cut into 1-inch pieces
- 2 cups chickpeas (freshly cooked or canned)
- Freshly ground black pepper

FOR THE GLAZE

- ¼ cup honey
- 2 tsp. fresh lemon juice
- 1 tsp. dried mint
- 1 tsp. harissa (optional; see Test Kitchen, p. 81, for more information)

FOR SERVING

- 1 cup couscous, cooked
- Reserved cilantro leaves
- Harissa (optional)

SEASON In a small bowl, combine the paprika, ginger, turmeric, cayenne, mint, coriander, cumin, 2 tsp. salt, and 1 tsp. pepper. Rub the shanks with 2 Tbs. of the spice mixture (save the rest for the braising liquid). Cover and refrigerate for at least 2 hours but preferably overnight.

SEAR Prepare a gas grill for direct grilling over medium heat (see Grill Skills, at left).

Grill the lamb shanks until golden brown, about 4 minutes per side. Let cool briefly and then tie each shank with 3 or 4 loops of butcher's twine.

BRAISE Prepare the grill for indirect grilling (see Grill Skills, at left). In an 8-quart heavy-duty pot, combine the onion, tomatoes, cilantro stems, lemon juice, garlic, and the remaining spice mixture. Stir in 4 cups water and 1 tsp. salt. Nestle the lamb shanks into the pot in a single layer. Set the pot on the grill over the cool zone. Cover the pot and close the grill lid. After 1 hour, add the carrots, turnips, and chickpeas. Cover the pot and the grill, and braise until the lamb shanks and vegetables are fork-tender, an additional ½ to 1 hour.

Transfer the shanks to a tray. With a slotted spoon, transfer the vegetables and chickpeas to a bowl and keep warm.

Pour the braising liquid into a heatproof vessel, such as a Pyrex measuring cup, and let sit until the fat rises to the top. Skim off and discard the fat. Taste the liquid; if it's too watery, return to the pot and boil over high heat until flavorful. Season to taste with salt, pepper, and lemon juice. Keep warm.

GLAZE Prepare the grill for direct grilling over medium heat (see Grill Skills, at left). In a small saucepan, combine 3 Tbs. of the braising liquid with the honey, lemon juice, mint, and harissa (if using). Boil over medium heat until the mixture has the consistency of a light syrup, 1 to 2 minutes.

Brush the mixture on the shanks and then grill them, turning and basting until the glaze has bubbled and has a few black spots, about 5 minutes total.

To serve, remove the strings from the shanks. Mound the couscous in a large shallow serving bowl. Spoon the vegetables and chickpeas over the couscous. Set the shanks on top, and sprinkle with the cilantro. Season the remaining braising liquid to taste with harissa (if using) and serve on the side.

make ahead

You can make all of these dishes through the braising step the day before serving. Just cool and wrap the meat and braising liquid separately. Refrigerate overnight and glaze the next day. To spread out the work even more, you can season the meat the day before you braise.



barbecue-braised bourbon beef with mustard glaze

Serve this incredibly tender pot roast with creamy polenta or thickly sliced roasted or grilled potatoes seasoned with olive oil, salt, and pepper.

Serves 6 to 8

FOR THE BEEF

- 2 tsp. chopped fresh thyme
- 2 tsp. chopped fresh rosemary
- 2 tsp. sweet Hungarian paprika
- 1 tsp. dry mustard (preferably Coleman's)
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1 4-lb. boneless beef chuck roast

FOR THE BRAISING LIQUID

- 2 to 2½ cups lower-salt chicken broth
- ½ cup bourbon
- 1 Tbs. coarse-grain Dijon mustard
- 2 tsp. unsulphured molasses
- 2 large yellow onions, halved and thinly sliced (about 4 cups)
- 4 medium cloves garlic, peeled

FOR THE GLAZE

- 2 Tbs. smooth Dijon mustard
- 2 tsp. chopped fresh rosemary

SEASON In a small bowl, combine the thyme, rosemary, paprika, dry mustard, and 2 tsp. each salt and pepper. Sprinkle the spice blend all over the roast. Cover and refrigerate for at least 2 hours but preferably overnight.

SEAR Prepare a gas grill for direct grilling over medium heat (see Grill Skills, p. 58). Grill the roast until nicely browned on all sides, 4 to 6 minutes per side. Let cool briefly and then tie the roast with several loops of butcher's twine (see Test Kitchen, p. 81, for directions). Put the roast in an 8-quart heavy-duty pot.

BRAISE Prepare the grill for indirect grilling (see Grill Skills, p. 58). In a small bowl, whisk ½ cup of the chicken broth with the bourbon, mustard, and molasses and pour the mixture over the meat. Scatter the onions and garlic on top of the meat; it's fine if some fall off. Put the pot on the grill over the cool zone. Cover the pot, close the grill lid, and cook for 1 hour.

Uncover the pot and turn the roast over so the onions are now on the bottom. Check the liquid level in the pot and add broth as necessary until there's about an inch of liquid in the pot. Continue to cook, pot uncovered, grill lid closed, for 1 hour, stirring the onions and checking the liquid level every 20 minutes and adding broth as needed to maintain about an inch of liquid.

Replace the lid on the pot and continue to cook the meat until fork-tender, about 1 hour more, checking after 30 minutes and adding more broth as needed to maintain 1 inch of liquid. Move the meat to a tray and pat dry.

Pour the onions and juices into a heatproof vessel, such as a Pyrex measuring cup, and let sit until the fat rises to the top. Skim off and discard the fat. Keep warm.

GLAZE Prepare the grill for direct grilling over medium heat (see Grill Skills, p. 58). In a food processor, purée ¼ cup of the onion mixture with the mustard and rosemary. Brush about half of the glaze on one side of the meat and put the meat on the grill, glaze side down. Brush the top of the roast with the remaining glaze. When the glaze turns brown on the bottom, after 2 to 3 minutes, flip and brown the other side, an additional 2 to 3 minutes.

To serve, remove the string and slice the meat into ½-inch-thick slices. Ladle the onion mixture over the meat and serve.





COVER RECIPE

barbecue-braised vietnamese short ribs with sweet vinegar glaze

These ribs are great served with rice noodles or steamed rice.

Serves 4

FOR THE RIBS

- 1 Tbs. mild pure chile powder, such as ancho (or substitute hot Hungarian paprika)
- 1 tsp. five-spice powder
- 1 tsp. dark brown sugar
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 4 lb. English-style beef short ribs (see Test Kitchen, p. 81)

FOR THE BRAISING LIQUID AND GLAZE

- 2 Tbs. peanut oil
- 2 cups chopped yellow onion
- 1 Tbs. chopped garlic
- 2 tsp. minced fresh ginger
- 2 cups lower-salt chicken broth
- ¼ cup plus 2 tsp. rice vinegar
- 3 Tbs. dark brown sugar
- 2 Tbs. Asian fish sauce
- 1 Tbs. soy sauce
- 1 whole star anise

FOR SERVING

- 3 scallions, thinly sliced (¼ cup)
- Cilantro sprigs

SEASON In a small bowl, combine the chile powder, five-spice powder, brown sugar, 2 tsp. salt, and 1 tsp. pepper. Sprinkle generously all over the ribs. Cover and refrigerate for at least 2 hours but preferably overnight.

SEAR Prepare a gas grill for direct grilling over medium-high heat (see Grill Skills, p. 58). Grill the ribs until all sides are nicely browned, 1 to 2 minutes per side. Let cool briefly and then tie with a couple of loops of butcher's twine.

BRAISE Prepare the grill for indirect grilling (see Grill Skills, p. 58). Set an 8-quart heavy-duty pot over medium heat and when hot, add the oil. Add the onions and cook, stirring occasionally, until soft, about 5 minutes. Add the garlic and ginger and stir for 1 minute more. Pour in the chicken broth, ¼ cup of the vinegar, 1 Tbs. of the brown sugar, the fish sauce, and the soy sauce. Add the star anise, bring to a boil, and then remove from the heat.

Put the ribs in the pot and set the pot on the grill over the cool zone. Cover the pot, close the grill lid, and cook for 30 minutes. Check the ribs and rearrange so they remain submerged in the simmering liquid. Check the ribs again after 30 minutes and move them around if necessary. After another 30 minutes, check the ribs for tenderness. They should be fork-tender but not falling

apart. If they're not tender enough, continue to cook, checking every 15 minutes. Remove the ribs from the pot and set aside.

Pour the liquid into a heatproof vessel, such as a Pyrex measuring cup, and let sit until the fat rises to the top. Skim off and discard the fat. Taste the liquid; if it's too watery, return to the pot and boil over high heat until flavorful.

GLAZE Prepare the grill for direct grilling over medium-high heat (see Grill Skills, p. 58). Pour 1 cup of the braising liquid into a small saucepan and stir in the remaining 2 Tbs. brown sugar and 2 tsp. rice vinegar. Over medium-high heat, reduce the liquid until it becomes syrupy, about 12 minutes—you'll have about ⅓ cup.

Brush the glaze over one side of each short rib and grill glazed side down until the glaze begins to bubble and lightly darken, 2 to 3 minutes. Brush another surface with the glaze and turn the ribs. Continue to brush and glaze, turning frequently, until all sides are nicely glazed. Transfer the ribs to a warm platter, drizzle with the remaining braising liquid, and garnish with the scallions and cilantro.

Bruce Aidells is the author of nine cookbooks, including Bruce Aidells's Complete Book of Pork. ■



Splendor in the Grass

BY TASHA DESERIO • At long last, it's picnic season. And while it's true that many meals just seem to taste better outside, it's also true that much picnic fare tends toward the predictable. Not this menu.

This fair-weather feast is an imaginative mix of do-ahead dishes that taste great individually and even better when combined on the plate. The grilled, brined chicken breasts, for example, are served with a rich chile oil that adds a unique flavor to the bulgur salad when the two come in contact. Likewise, the garlicky yogurt sauce that accompanies the toasted pita chips makes a fine dip for the chicken as well. Go ahead, play with your food.

There's more fun to be had packing up this picnic. When every dish is boxed individually, and all picnickers get their own box of goodies, unwrapping and discovering what's to eat takes on the feel of a group birthday party. (For more on how to pack it up—and keep it green while you're at it—see pages 64 and 67.)

No fried chicken, no potato chips, no sandwiches (unless you count the impossibly delicious ginger and lemon sandwich cookies for dessert)—a picnic never tasted so good. Let the hunt for that perfect grassy spot begin.





Wrap It Up

- Start with large individual boxes with flap lids that can hold several containers snugly.
- Next, look for medium-size, rectangular boxes with flap lids to hold the chicken, the bulgur salad, and the pita.
- Pack the peppers and sauces in separate sealed plastic containers. They should be added to the plate just before eating; otherwise, they'll stain the other foods.

brined grilled chicken breasts with red chile oil

This brine not only keeps the chicken moist, but the sugar in it helps the chicken brown nicely on the grill.

Serves 6

FOR THE CHICKEN

- 2 Tbs. granulated sugar
- 2 Tbs. kosher salt
- 6 boneless, skinless chicken breast halves (preferably organic), tenders reserved for another use

FOR THE CHILE OIL

- 1 Tbs. cumin seeds
- 1 Tbs. coriander seeds
- 1 tsp. caraway seeds
- 3-4 dried New Mexico or Anaheim chiles
- 1 tsp. cayenne
- 2 medium cloves garlic, minced and mashed to a paste with a pinch of salt
- Kosher salt
- 1 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- ½ tsp. red wine vinegar, or to taste

BRINE THE CHICKEN

In a large bowl, combine 2 cups boiling water with the sugar and salt and stir to dissolve. Let cool completely. Add the chicken breasts, cover, and refrigerate for 2 to 3 hours.

MAKE THE CHILE OIL

In a medium skillet, lightly toast the cumin, coriander, and caraway seeds over medium heat, stirring often, until fragrant, about 2 minutes. Grind the seeds to a powder in an electric spice grinder and transfer to a medium bowl. In the same skillet, toast the chiles over medium heat, pressing on them with a spatula, until fragrant and darker in spots, about 1 minute per side. Remove the stems and seeds and grind in the spice grinder—you'll need 3 Tbs. ground chile. Add the ground chile, cayenne, garlic, and 1 tsp. salt to the ground spices, and then stir in the oil and vinegar. Taste and adjust the season-

ing with more salt or vinegar if necessary. Stir before using. (The chile oil can be made up to several hours in advance, or up to a day ahead and stored in the refrigerator.)

GRILL THE CHICKEN

Prepare a medium gas or charcoal grill fire. While the grill heats, remove the chicken from the brine, pat dry with paper towels, and let sit at room temperature.

Toss the chicken with 2 Tbs. of the chile oil. Grill the chicken without moving until golden brown grill marks form, 4 to 6 minutes. Flip the chicken and grill until just cooked through, 4 to 5 minutes. Transfer to a cutting board and let rest for a few minutes. Holding your knife at an angle, cut the breasts crosswise into ½-inch-thick slices and let cool to room temperature. Serve with the remaining chile oil on the side. (The chicken can be grilled up to 6 hours in advance. Refrigerate and return to room temperature for serving.)

Food styling by Susan Sugarman

- Wrap the cookies in parchment or in a parchment bag and place them carefully in the box.
- If you aim to impress, glue a menu card to the lids of the boxes so people know what they're eating.
- To keep everything fresh, transport the picnic boxes in a cooler, with ice packs. Pack a tote bag with plates, forks, knives, and napkins (see page 67 for green options).



bulgur salad with wilted chard and green olives

Be sure to use good-quality olives and rinse them well before you remove the pits, or the salad will be too salty.

Yields about 6 cups; serves 6 to 8

- 1½ cups medium bulgur**
Kosher salt
- 1½ lb. green Swiss chard (about 1 large or 2 small bunches), stemmed**
- ¼ cup fresh lemon juice (from 1 to 2 lemons)**
- 2 medium cloves garlic, minced and mashed to a paste with a pinch of salt**
- 1 large shallot, finely diced**
- ½ lb. whole green olives, such as picholines, rinsed well in warm water, pitted, and very coarsely chopped (1 cup)**
- ½ cup coarsely chopped fresh cilantro**
- ½ cup coarsely chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley**
- ½ cup extra-virgin olive oil**
Freshly ground black pepper

Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Put the bulgur and 1 tsp. salt in a large bowl. Add 2¼ cups of the boiling water and cover the bowl. Let sit until the water has been absorbed and the bulgur is tender, about 1 hour.

Add 1 Tbs. salt to the remaining boiling water, add the chard, and cook until tender, 2 to 3 minutes. Drain the chard and run under cold water to cool. Thoroughly squeeze the chard to remove the excess liquid and chop to the same size as the chopped herbs. Lightly toss the chard so it doesn't remain in clumps when combined with the bulgur.

Combine the lemon juice, garlic, and shallot and let sit for at least 15 minutes.

Gently fold the lemon juice mixture, chard, olives, cilantro, parsley, and olive oil into the bulgur. Season to taste with salt and pepper. (The salad may be made a day ahead and stored in the refrigerator. Taste and adjust the seasoning before serving.)

Picnic for Six

*Brined Grilled Chicken Breasts
with Chile Oil*

*Bulgur Salad with Wilted Chard
and Green Olives*

*Toasted Pita with
Black Sesame Seeds and Sumac*

Garlic-Yogurt Sauce

*Charred Peppers with Garlic
and Sherry Vinegar*

*Ginger-Spice Sandwich Cookies
with Lemon Cream*



toasted pita with black sesame seeds and sumac

This recipe makes more than you need, but you won't regret it. The pita chips keep well in a sealed bag. Look for black sesame seeds and sumac in specialty stores (or see *Where to Buy It*, p. 89). The Garlic-Yogurt Sauce (below) makes a great dip.

Yields about 36 pieces

- 2 tsp. black sesame seeds**
- 1 tsp. ground sumac**
- ¼ tsp. cayenne; more to taste**
- Kosher salt**
- 6 whole wheat or white pita breads**
- ½ cup extra-virgin olive oil, approximately**

Position a rack in the center of the oven and heat the oven to 400°F.

In a small bowl, combine the black sesame seeds, sumac, cayenne, and 1½ tsp. salt.

Split each pita horizontally into 2 rounds and tear each round into 3 rustic pieces. Brush a large rimmed baking sheet with a generous amount of olive oil, and spread 12 of the pita pieces in a single layer, inner side down, on the sheet. Brush the outer side of the pita with additional olive oil and sprinkle evenly with about a third of the spice mixture. Toast the pita in the oven until golden brown and crisp, about 8 minutes. Repeat with the remaining pita and spice mixture in two more batches. (The chips may be made 1 day ahead.)

garlic-yogurt sauce

This very simple sauce combines beautifully with the other foods in this menu.

Yields about 1 cup

- 1 cup full-fat plain yogurt**
- 2 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil**
- 1 medium clove garlic, minced and mashed to a paste with a pinch of salt**
- Kosher salt to taste**

Combine the yogurt, oil, and garlic in a small bowl and season to taste with salt. Refrigerate until shortly before serving. (The sauce may be made 1 day ahead.)



charred peppers with garlic and sherry vinegar

Serves 6

- 6 medium red bell peppers**
- 3 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil**
- Kosher salt**
- 4 medium cloves garlic, very thinly sliced (about 1 Tbs.)**
- 3 Tbs. sherry vinegar**
- Freshly ground black pepper**

Prepare a medium gas or charcoal grill fire. Rub the peppers with 1 Tbs. of the oil, set them on the grill, and char on all sides, 8 to 12 minutes total. If the peppers still feel a bit firm, put them in a bowl and cover with plastic—the residual heat will finish cooking them. Or, if the peppers are tender, let them cool at room temperature.

When the peppers are cool enough to handle, skin, core, and seed them. Cut or tear the peppers into strips about ½ inch wide and put them in a medium bowl. Season with ½ tsp. salt.

Put the remaining 2 Tbs. oil and the garlic in a small skillet and cook over medium heat until the garlic begins to sizzle and turn golden brown, 1 to 2 minutes. Remove the pan from the heat and carefully add the vinegar. Pour the garlic mixture over the peppers, and let cool at room temperature. Season to taste with salt and pepper. (The peppers may be made up to 2 days ahead and kept in the refrigerator.)

Make It Green

For an eco-friendly picnic, use 100 percent post-consumer recycled boxes and clear containers made of corn-based plastic that are compostable. Look for bamboo plates and utensils and for unbleached, chemical-free napkins that can be composted. For sources, see page 89.





ginger-spice sandwich cookies with lemon cream

If you make these a day ahead of time, the cookies will soften a bit, and the flavors will mingle nicely. Fresh spices are key.

Yields about 30 sandwich cookies

FOR THE COOKIES

- 9 oz. (2 cups) unbleached all-purpose flour
- 2 tsp. ground ginger
- 1½ tsp. ground cinnamon
- ½ tsp. ground cardamom
- ½ tsp. baking soda
- ½ tsp. kosher salt
- 6 oz. (¾ cup) unsalted butter, softened
- ½ cup packed dark brown sugar
- ½ cup granulated sugar; more for rolling
- ¼ cup unsulphured molasses
- 1 large egg, at room temperature
- ½ tsp. pure vanilla extract

FOR THE LEMON CREAM

- 4 oz. cream cheese, at room temperature
- 1 Tbs. finely grated lemon zest (from 1 medium lemon)
- 6 oz. (1½ cups) confectioners' sugar

MAKE THE COOKIES

Position a rack in the center of the oven and heat the oven to 350°F. Line three baking sheets with parchment.

In a medium bowl, whisk the flour, ginger, cinnamon, cardamom, baking soda, and salt.

In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat the butter and both sugars on medium-high speed until light and fluffy, about 3 minutes. Add the molasses, egg, and vanilla and continue to beat until incorporated, about 1 minute.

Reduce the speed to low, slowly add the flour mixture, and mix until just incorporated, about 1 minute. Shape the dough into a disk, wrap in plastic, and refrigerate until firm, about 1 hour.

Put about ½ cup granulated sugar in a small bowl. Using your hands, roll teaspoonfuls of dough into 1-inch balls. Roll each ball in sugar and arrange them about 2 inches apart on the lined baking sheets. Use the bottom of a glass to flatten the cookies slightly. Bake one sheet at a time until the cookies feel dry to the touch and are beginning to firm up (they'll still feel soft inside), 10 to 14 minutes. Cool completely on racks.

MAKE THE LEMON CREAM

With a hand mixer, mix the cream cheese and lemon zest in a medium bowl until smooth. Slowly add the confectioners' sugar and continue to mix until smooth.

ASSEMBLE THE COOKIES

Drop about 1 tsp. of the lemon cream in the center of a cookie, top with another cookie, and gently press them. Repeat with the remaining cookies. Store in an airtight container for up to 2 days.

A former Chez Panisse cook, Tasha DeSerio is now co-proprietor of Olive Green Catering in Berkeley, California. ■



Get the shopping list and game plan for this menu at FineCooking.com/extras.



All together now: The chicken, salad, pita chips, yogurt sauce, and peppers make a fine (and delicious) mess.

Crab Cakes

The Maryland classic battles a chef's inspired update in the tastiest showdown of the summer. BY SUSIE MIDDLETON AND ERIC RIPERT

the classic....



Inked In

Crab cakes as we know them made their print debut in Crosby Gaige's 1939 *New York World's Fair Cook Book*. They were called Baltimore Crab Cakes, in honor of their place of origin.



Bigger Is Better

The key to delicious crab cakes is starting with nice, big chunks of crab (blue crab is traditional) and handling them gently. Look for crab labeled jumbo lump or backfin lump.



Spice It Up

It's not a classic crab cake without Old Bay seasoning, a traditional spice blend created in the 1940s that includes celery seeds, paprika, and black pepper.



Bread Matters

Fresh breadcrumbs (and eggs) are used as binders. But use just enough to hold the crabmeat together. Cook's hint: White sandwich bread yields the absolute best cakes—soft and flaky at the same time.



TRADITIONAL OR INNOVATIVE? For a side-by-side tasting to find the ultimate crab cake, we sought out the most delicious authentic Maryland crab cake we could find and then asked a superstar chef for his original interpretation. Susie Middleton, *Fine Cooking's* editor at large and a Chesapeake Bay native, contributed the definitive classic, which also happens to be the recipe she grew up eating. Chef Eric Ripert of New York City's four-star seafood restaurant Le Bernardin gave us a delightfully fresh, modern version. The battle is on.

....the update



Prized Crustacean

Peekytoe crab is almost as treasured by chefs as lobster. For more on how this Maine crab got its name and made it big, see page 83.



Over the Top

Toasted unsweetened coconut flakes sprinkled on top add a little crunch to these "cakes."



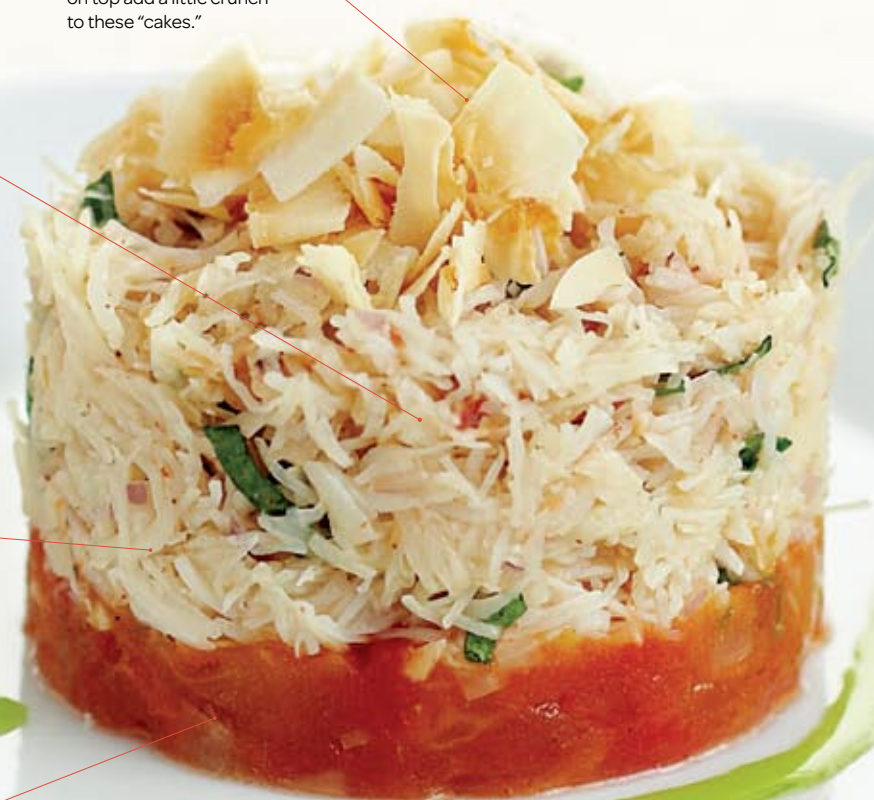
Exotic Twist

For Chef Ripert, a quick soak in lime juice and coconut milk for the crab evokes the sunny beaches of the Caribbean.



Bottom Line

In a nod to the season, a sweet, spiced-up tomato chutney enhances the natural sweetness of the crab.



classic maryland crab cakes

You can find Old Bay seasoning in most supermarkets and seafood stores. Use just enough to give a hint of its presence or it will overpower the crab.

Serves 4

- 1 lb. jumbo lump or backfin lump crabmeat, fresh or pasteurized**
- 1 large egg**
- ¼ cup mayonnaise**
- 1½ tsp. Dijon mustard**
- 1½ tsp. Old Bay seasoning**
- 1 tsp. fresh lemon juice**
- ½ tsp. Worcestershire sauce**
- Kosher salt**
- 1½ cups fresh breadcrumbs (from soft white sandwich bread, such as Pepperidge Farm)**

1 Tbs. chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley

2 Tbs. unsalted butter

1 Tbs. olive oil

Lemon wedges for serving

Drain the crabmeat, if necessary, and pick through it for shells (jumbo lump will not have shells). Put the crab in a medium mixing bowl and set aside.

In a small bowl, whisk the egg, mayonnaise, mustard, Old Bay seasoning, lemon juice, Worcestershire sauce, and ¼ tsp. salt. Scrape the mixture over the crab and mix gently until well combined. Gently break up the lumps with your fingers but do not overmix.

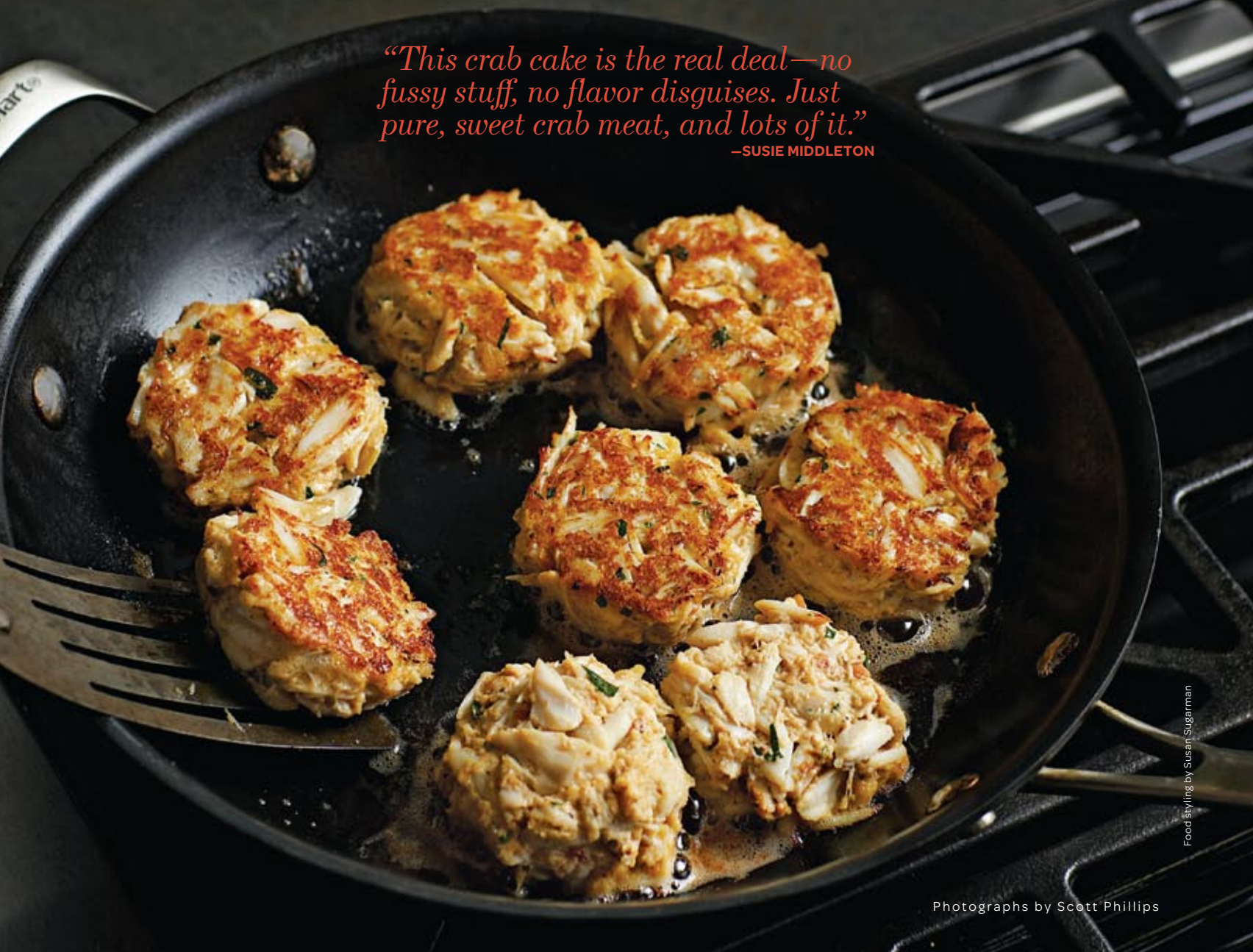
Sprinkle the breadcrumbs and the parsley over the mixture, and mix them in thoroughly

but gently; try not to turn the mixture into a mash—it should still be somewhat loose. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for 1 to 3 hours.

Shape the crab mixture into 8 cakes about 1 inch thick. In a 12-inch nonstick skillet, heat the butter with the olive oil over medium heat. When the butter is frothy, add the cakes to the pan (8 should fit comfortably). Cook until dark golden brown on the underside, about 4 minutes. Flip the cakes, reduce the heat to medium low, and continue cooking until the other side is well browned, 4 to 5 minutes. Serve with lemon wedges on the side for squeezing over the cakes.

“This crab cake is the real deal—no fussy stuff, no flavor disguises. Just pure, sweet crab meat, and lots of it.”

—SUSIE MIDDLETON



lime-and-coconut-marinated peekytoe “crab cakes” with tomato chutney

In true restaurant fashion, you'll need a ring mold to build these “cakes” so that they hold their shape. See Test Kitchen, p. 81, for more information.

Serves 6

FOR THE TOMATO CHUTNEY

- 2 tsp. black peppercorns
- 1 tsp. coriander seeds
- 1 tsp. yellow mustard seeds
- 4 whole cloves
- 1 bay leaf
- 2 Tbs. canola oil
- ½ cup small-diced yellow onion
- 1 tsp. minced garlic
- 1 tsp. minced fresh ginger
- 3 cups peeled, seeded, and diced fresh tomatoes
- 1 Tbs. seeded, minced jalapeño
- 1 Tbs. granulated sugar
- Fine sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

FOR THE BASIL OIL

- 2 cups loosely packed fresh basil
- ½ cup canola oil

FOR THE CRAB

- 1 lb. peekytoe crabmeat (or substitute jumbo lump or Dungeness)
- 6 Tbs. fresh lime juice
- ¼ cup very loosely packed fresh basil, thinly sliced
- 3 Tbs. minced shallot
- 3 Tbs. coconut milk
- ¾ tsp. Espelette pepper (optional)
- Fine sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

FOR THE GARNISH

- ¼ cup unsweetened coconut flakes, toasted
- 6 small fresh basil tops

MAKE THE CHUTNEY

Cut a small square of cheesecloth and put the peppercorns, coriander seeds, mustard seeds, cloves, and bay leaf in the middle of the cloth. Gather the edges into a pouch and secure with twine.

Heat the oil in a 4-quart heavy-duty nonreactive saucepan over medium heat. Add the onion, garlic, and ginger and cook, stirring occasionally, until soft but not browned, 3 to 5 minutes. Reduce the heat to medium low and add the tomatoes, jalapeño, sugar, and the spice bundle. Cook, stirring frequently, until very thick and most of the liquid has evaporated, 25 to 30 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper, discard the spice bundle, and let cool.

MAKE THE BASIL OIL

Bring a medium pot of salted water to a boil over high heat. Prepare an ice bath by filling a medium bowl with several inches of ice water. Blanch the basil in the boiling water for 10 seconds. Drain and immediately plunge into the ice bath to cool. Drain again and gently squeeze out any water. Put the basil and the oil in a blender and process until

puréed, about 2 minutes. Line a fine sieve with cheesecloth and strain the oil into a small bowl, using a spoon or small spatula to push the oil through the cheesecloth. Discard the cheesecloth and set the oil aside.

MARINATE THE CRAB

Pick over the crab to remove any cartilage or shells. Work with the crab gently, being careful not to break up the meat. Put the crab in a medium bowl and add the lime juice, basil, shallot, coconut milk, Espelette pepper (if using), a pinch of salt, and a few grinds of pepper. Gently toss to coat and let marinate for about 10 minutes at room temperature. Put the crab in a fine sieve over a medium bowl and drain for at least 5 minutes.

ASSEMBLE THE DISH

Put a 2½-inch-diameter ring mold in the center of a small plate, spread about 2 Tbs. of the chutney in the bottom, and top with ½ cup of the crab mixture. Carefully remove the mold. Repeat to make 5 more servings. Drizzle some basil oil around each plate, and garnish the top of each “cake” with toasted coconut flakes and basil tops. Serve immediately.

Susie Middleton lives and cooks on Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts, where she contributes to Edible Vineyard. Eric Ripert will host his own PBS show, Avec Ripert, this fall. ■

“Sure, I like crab cakes as much as the next person, but there’s plenty of room to play around if you’re a little creative. My ‘cakes’ are fun, fresh—slightly exotic.”

—ERIC RIPERT



Which is your favorite version? Go to [FineCooking.com/extras](https://www.finecooking.com/extras) and cast your vote.



Salad: *it's what's for dinner*



Almond-Crusted Chicken
and Nectarine Salad with
Buttermilk-Chive Dressing,
recipe on page 76.

Get tonight's meal on the
table in no time with these
fast, fresh recipes.

BY MARYELLEN DRISCOLL

GREENS ARE IN. If you belong to a CSA or regularly visit your local farmers' market, you know what I mean. This is their season. So at my house, where we feast on what's fresh, salad now moves to center stage. A head of lettuce doesn't get stretched over a few nights; it's the meal.



almond-crusted chicken and nectarine salad with buttermilk-chive dressing

If you can't find chicken tenderloins, look for thin cutlets, which work just as well.

Serves 4

FOR THE DRESSING

- ¼ cup buttermilk
- 1 Tbs. sour cream
- 1 Tbs. white balsamic vinegar
- ½ tsp. honey
- 2 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 Tbs. thinly sliced fresh chives
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

FOR THE CHICKEN

- 2 large eggs
- 1¾ cups sliced almonds
- ½ cup all-purpose flour
- 1½ lb. chicken tenderloins, pounded ¼ inch thick
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 2-3 Tbs. vegetable oil

FOR THE SALAD

- 6 cups torn tender lettuce (such as butter lettuce, oakleaf, Red Sails) or arugula or both
- 2 small to medium ripe nectarines (or peaches), halved, pitted, and sliced ¼ inch thick
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

MAKE THE DRESSING

In a medium bowl or liquid measuring cup, combine the buttermilk, sour cream, vinegar, and honey. Slowly whisk in the oil to blend. Stir in the chives and season to taste with salt and pepper.

COOK THE CHICKEN

Lightly beat the eggs in a wide, shallow dish. Pulse the almonds and flour together in a food processor until the almonds are chopped; transfer the almond mixture to another wide, shallow dish. Season the chicken on all sides with 1 tsp. salt and ¾ tsp. pepper. Dip one piece of chicken at a time in the eggs. Shake off the excess and dredge in the almond mixture, pressing lightly to help it adhere. Set aside on a wire rack.

Heat 2 Tbs. of the oil in a large skillet over medium heat until shimmering hot. Working in batches, cook the chicken until light golden brown on both sides and just cooked through, 3 to 4 minutes per side. Transfer the chicken to a paper-towel-lined plate when done. Between batches, remove any stray almonds from the pan and add more oil if necessary.

ASSEMBLE THE SALAD

In a large bowl, toss the lettuce, arugula, or both and the nectarines with about half of the dressing. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Divide among 4 dinner plates. Divide the chicken among the plates, overlapping the pieces on top of the salad. Drizzle additional dressing over the chicken and serve.





pan-seared salmon with baby greens and fennel

If you have fleur de sel, use it to season the finished salad. The salt flakes are an appealing contrast to the sweet and citrusy dressing.

Serves 4

FOR THE DRESSING

- 2½ Tbs. Champagne or white wine vinegar**
- 2 Tbs. fresh orange juice**
- 1 tsp. finely grated orange zest**
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**
- ¼ cup dried cherries**
- ½ cup extra-virgin olive oil**

FOR THE SALMON

- 4 6-oz. skinless salmon fillets, preferably center cut**
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**
- 1½ Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil**

FOR THE SALAD

- 8 oz. mixed baby salad greens (about 8 lightly packed cups)**
- 1 small fennel bulb, trimmed, halved lengthwise, cored, and very thinly sliced crosswise**
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**

START THE DRESSING

In a small bowl, combine the vinegar with the orange juice and zest, ¼ tsp. salt, and a few grinds of pepper. Stir in the dried cherries and set aside.

COOK THE SALMON

Season the salmon fillets on both sides with 1 tsp. salt and ¼ tsp. pepper. Heat the oil in a 12-inch skillet over medium-high heat. Cook the salmon, flipping once, until barely cooked through and a rich golden brown crust develops on both sides, 4 to 5 minutes per side. Set aside on a plate.

FINISH THE DRESSING

Using a fork or slotted spoon, remove the cherries from the orange juice mixture and set aside. Slowly whisk the ½ cup olive oil into the orange juice mixture until blended. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

ASSEMBLE THE SALAD

Combine the greens and fennel in a large bowl. Add about half of the vinaigrette to the salad, toss, and season to taste with salt and pepper. Divide the salad among 4 large plates or shallow bowls. Set a piece of salmon on each salad and sprinkle the cherries around the fish. Drizzle some of the remaining vinaigrette over each fillet and serve.



grilled steak salad with pineapple-ginger dressing

Look for peeled and cut fresh pineapple in the produce section of your supermarket; it's a great time-saver. **Serves 4**

FOR THE DRESSING

- 5 Tbs. pineapple juice
- 1 Tbs. soy sauce
- 1 Tbs. peanut oil
- 1 Tbs. Asian sesame oil
- 2 tsp. fresh lime juice
- ½ tsp. honey
- ½ tsp. finely grated fresh ginger
- 1 small clove garlic, minced
- Large pinch crushed red pepper flakes
- ¼ cup small-diced fresh pineapple
- 1 Tbs. finely chopped fresh cilantro

FOR THE STEAK

- 1 lb. flank steak
- 1½ Tbs. vegetable oil; more for the grill
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

FOR THE SALAD

- 6 oz. torn butter lettuce (about 6 lightly packed cups)
- 1 medium cucumber, seeded and thinly sliced
- 3 radishes, thinly sliced
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- ¼ cup thinly sliced scallion (both white and light-green parts)

Heat a gas grill to medium high.

MAKE THE DRESSING

In a small bowl, whisk the pineapple juice, soy sauce, peanut oil, sesame oil, lime juice, honey, ginger, garlic, and pepper flakes to blend. Stir in the pineapple and cilantro.

COOK THE STEAK

Rub the steak with the oil and season with 1 tsp. each salt and pepper. Clean and oil the grill grates. Grill the steak, covered, until it has nice grill marks on one side, 5 to 6 minutes. Flip and reduce the heat to medium. Cook, covered, until done to your liking, an additional 4 to 5 minutes for medium rare. Transfer to a cutting board and let rest for 5 to 10 minutes.

ASSEMBLE THE SALAD

In a large bowl, toss the lettuce, cucumber, and radishes with about half of the dressing. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Divide among 4 large plates.

Thinly slice the steak across the grain and drape it over the greens. Drizzle some of the remaining dressing over the beef, sprinkle with the scallions, and serve.



spinach and artichoke salad with couscous cakes and feta

Quick-to-cook couscous cakes make this meatless main-course salad satisfying.

Serves 3

FOR THE DRESSING

- 2 Tbs. fresh lemon juice
- 1 Tbs. sour cream
- 1 tsp. finely chopped fresh mint
- 5 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

FOR THE COUSCOUS CAKES

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup couscous
- Kosher salt
- 1 large clove garlic, peeled
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup packed fresh flat-leaf parsley leaves
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup canned chickpeas, rinsed and drained
- 2 large eggs, lightly beaten
- Finely grated zest of 1 medium lemon (about $1\frac{1}{2}$ tsp.)
- 3 Tbs. vegetable or canola oil

FOR THE SALAD

- 8 oz. baby spinach, washed and dried (about 6 lightly packed cups)

- 1 14-oz. can artichoke bottoms, drained, rinsed, and sliced
- 15 cherry tomatoes, halved
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1 oz. crumbled feta (about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup)

MAKE THE DRESSING

In a small bowl, combine the lemon juice, sour cream, and mint. Slowly whisk in the olive oil. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

MAKE THE COUSCOUS CAKES

Put the couscous and 1 tsp. salt in a medium bowl. Add 1 cup boiling water to the couscous, cover the bowl with a pan lid or plate, and let sit for 4 to 5 minutes.

Coarsely chop the garlic in a food processor. Add the parsley and pulse until finely chopped. Add the chickpeas and 1 tsp. salt and pulse until coarsely chopped.

Uncover the couscous and fluff with a fork. Stir in the chickpea mixture, eggs, and lemon zest until well combined. Press the couscous mixture into a $\frac{1}{4}$ -cup measure, smooth the top, and invert the measuring cup to release

the cake onto a plate. Repeat with the remaining couscous mixture to make 9 cakes.

Heat $1\frac{1}{2}$ Tbs. of the vegetable oil in a large skillet over medium heat until shimmering hot. Add 5 of the couscous cakes to the skillet and use a spatula to lightly flatten the cakes so they're about $\frac{3}{4}$ inch thick. Cook, flipping once, until crisp and golden brown on both sides, 2 to 3 minutes per side. Transfer to a paper-towel-lined plate. Add the remaining $1\frac{1}{2}$ Tbs. vegetable oil to the skillet and cook the remaining cakes the same way.

ASSEMBLE THE SALAD

In a large bowl, toss the spinach, artichokes, and tomatoes with about three-quarters of the dressing. Season to taste with salt and pepper and divide among 3 large plates. Top each salad with 3 couscous cakes, sprinkle each salad with feta, and drizzle with the remaining dressing.

Maryellen Driscoll is a Fine Cooking contributing editor. ■



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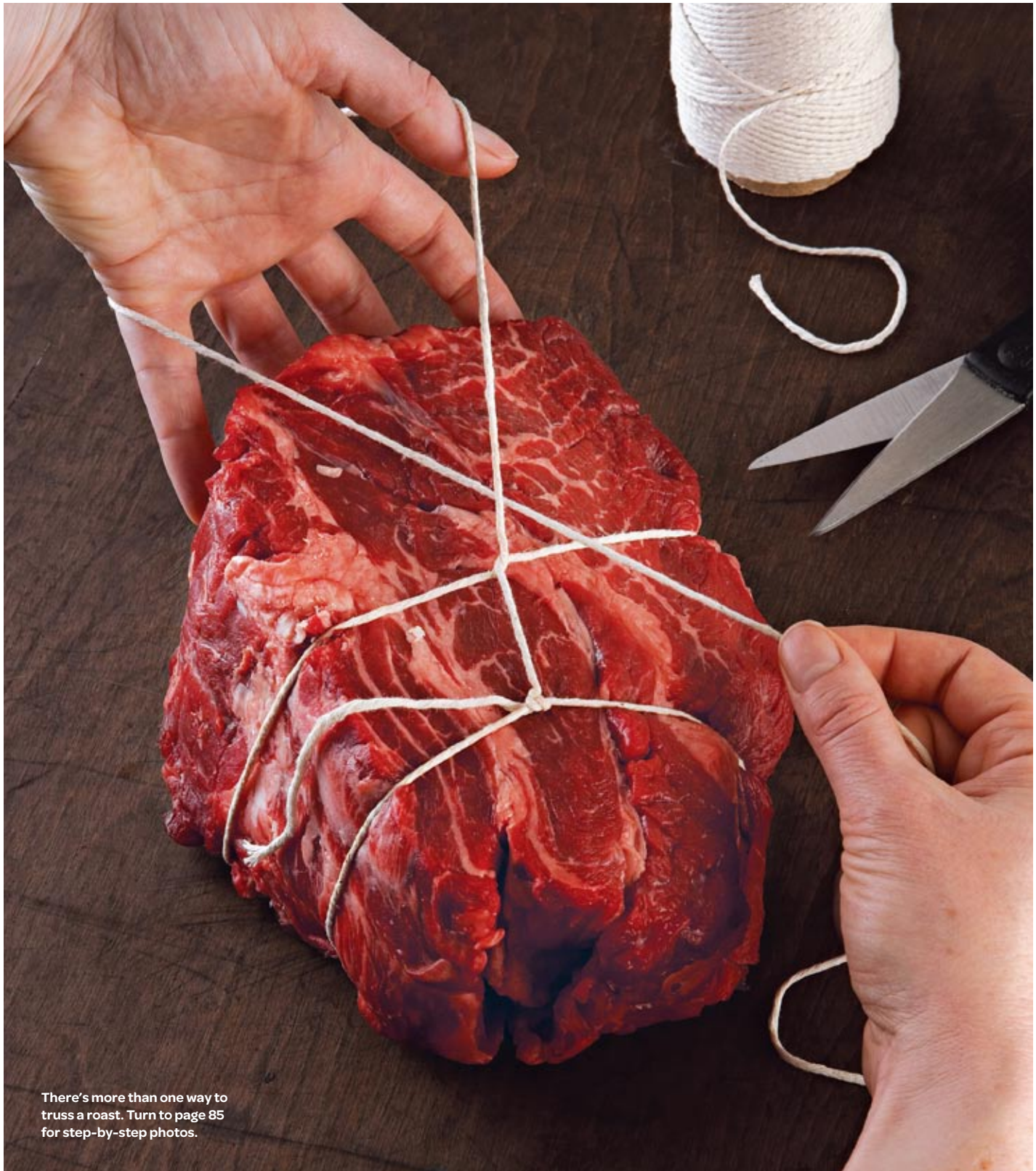
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There's more than one way to truss a roast. Turn to page 85 for step-by-step photos.



COUNTRY-STYLE PORK RIBS



ENGLISH-STYLE BEEF SHORT RIBS



FLANKEN-STYLE
BEEF SHORT RIBS

INGREDIENT

Ribs for barbecue-braising

WHEN IT COMES TO RIBS on the grill, we usually think of baby backs or spareribs, but for our barbecue-braising recipes on page 54, we wanted meaty ribs with a high fat content that would hold up to long, slow, moist cooking.

Country-style pork ribs

Meatier and thicker than spareribs and baby backs, country-style pork ribs are actually blade chops from the shoulder end of the loin. They're available either bone-in or boneless and can be found in the meat section of most supermarkets.

Beef short ribs

Beef short ribs are generally cut in two styles: flanken and English. Flanken are cut across the bones, resulting in a strip of meat about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch thick with several bone segments. English ribs are cut parallel to the bone, so each piece consists of one 2- to 4-inch segment of meat attached to one piece of rib bone. We tested the Vietnamese Short Ribs on page 61 with English ribs, but you can substitute flanken—just keep in mind that the cooking time may be shorter. Most supermarkets carry short ribs, but because they're not as popular during the summer months, you may need to special-order them.

—Melissa Pellegrino and Jennifer Armentrout

GLOSSARY

Is it done?

Two terms for knowing when to take the pot off the heat.

Fork tender: This term is used to describe the readiness of slow-cooked meat, like the barbecue-braised dishes on page 54. To gauge whether the meat is fully cooked, you just stick a fork in it. There are two ways to tell if it's fork tender. Pull on the fork—if the meat releases easily, it's done. Or you can gently twist the fork against the grain of the meat—if the meat pulls apart into strands, it's good to go.





EQUIPMENT

Ring molds

EXPLORE THE EQUIPMENT cupboard of any good restaurant, and chances are you'll find a stash of ring molds. These open-ended cylinders come in a variety of diameters and heights and are a chef's secret weapon for building towering creations like the peekytoe "crab cake" on page 73.

There are several ring mold options available. The most versatile are made of stainless steel or aluminum, so in addition to molding mile-high foods, you can also use them to bake tall cakes. They're available at restaurant supply stores (see page 89 for a mail-order source).

Chefs looking to balance their bottom lines have also been known to fashion their own ring molds from plastic PVC pipe (found in any hardware store). With a hacksaw, they

can customize the molds to whatever length they want.

In that same spirit of do-it-yourself resourcefulness, we searched our test kitchen to see what other ring mold stand-ins we could find, and came up with two. First, a nesting set of biscuit cutters yielded a 2½-inch-diameter cutter—just the size we needed for the crab cakes. It wasn't as tall as a true ring mold might be, but it was tall enough. Then we noticed that a 8-ounce can of tomato sauce is the perfect diameter, and it's taller than a biscuit cutter. The only catch is to make sure you use a can with a rim on the bottom; otherwise, it's nearly impossible to remove the bottom with a can opener.

—Jennifer Armentrout



From left: double-sided biscuit cutter, PVC piping, stainless-steel ring mold, tomato sauce can.



INGREDIENT

Peekytoe crab

There's a rags-to-riches story behind the peekytoe crab, a favorite ingredient in high-end restaurants. These crabs, known more commonly as rock, sand, or bay crabs, used to be just a throwaway byproduct of the lobster industry. But that all changed when a marketing campaign by the Browne Trading Company in Portland, Maine, amped up the crab's appeal (and its price) by giving it a stylish, new name: peekytoe.

The name is derived from the word "picked," which is Maine slang for "pointed." The crabs have legs with a sharp point that turns inward, a "picked toe." In Maine, "picked" is often pronounced with two syllables, and eventually "picked toe" morphed into "peekytoe."

The small crabs themselves are too fragile to ship live, so they're cooked and picked prior to shipping. The delicate, sweet, white and pale-pink-speckled meat best lends itself to straightforward preparations where its flavor can really shine, as in Eric Ripert's Lime-Coconut-Marinaded Peekytoe "Crab Cakes" with Tomato Chutney on page 73.

—Melissa Pellegrino



Nappé: This French word describes the consistency at which a sauce, especially a custard sauce, is thick enough to coat the back of a spoon and hold the shape of a line when a finger is drawn through it. The ice cream base on page 48 is a type of custard, and when it's nappé, it's ready to come off the stove.

—Melissa Pellegrino and Jennifer Armentrout



INGREDIENT

Harissa

Harissa is a spicy North African sauce or paste made of ground dried chile peppers, garlic, olive oil, and spices like coriander, caraway, and cumin. Primarily Tunisian, harissa is also used in Moroccan, Algerian, and Libyan cooking. Ranging in heat from mild to scorching hot, harissa is used as both a condiment and an ingredient that's stirred into cous-cous, tagines (stews), soups, and pastas.

Look for harissa in tubes, cans, or jars at well-stocked grocery stores and specialty markets (see page 89 for a mail-order source). Or try your hand at making a homemade batch, using this recipe.

Yields about 1 cup

- 6** dried Anaheim or New Mexico chiles
- 4** dried chiles de Arbol
- 1** tsp. caraway seed
- 1** tsp. coriander seed
- ¾** tsp. cumin seed
- 2** medium cloves garlic, minced
- ½** tsp. finely grated lemon zest
- Kosher salt**
- 2** Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil; more as needed

Bring a kettle of water to a boil. Stem and seed the chiles and put them in a medium heatproof bowl. Add enough boiling water to cover the chiles and let soak until well softened, about 1 hour. Drain and squeeze out any excess water.

Meanwhile, in a small skillet, lightly toast the caraway, coriander, and cumin seeds over medium heat until fragrant, 2 to 3 minutes. Let cool slightly and then grind finely with a spice grinder.

Put the chiles, ground spices, garlic, lemon zest, ¾ tsp. salt, and 1 Tbs. warm water in a blender. With the motor running, gradually pour the oil in a steady stream through the feed hole in the blender cap; continue blending until a mostly smooth, paste-like sauce forms. If the sauce is too thick to purée, add warm water 1 Tbs. at a time to loosen. Transfer the harissa to an airtight container and top with a thin layer of olive oil. Store in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks.

—Melissa Pellegrino



EQUIPMENT

Grill surface thermometer

KNOWING HOW HOT THE GRILL IS can be a little tricky. Even if your grill has a thermometer built into the lid, you still can't tell how hot it is down on the grate where all the cooking happens. That's why we were happy to discover this grill surface thermometer from CDN. Small and easy to read, it sits right on the surface of the grill grates. We grew to love it while testing the barbecue-braising recipes on page 54, all of which call for maintaining 350°F for up to several hours. See page 89 for a mail-order source.

—Melissa Pellegrino

TIPS

Taste nut oils before using

While all oils have a limited shelf life, nut and seed oils, like hazelnut, almond, sesame, and walnut, are more likely than others to turn rancid. The main reason is that they've sat too long on the shelf, either at home or in the market. We've purchased nut oils that had gone bad before they were opened. The lesson: Be sure to taste your oil before every use. An oil can be rancid without smelling bad, so don't just take a whiff—try it. If its flavor is the slightest bit unpleasant, discard it.

How to protect those pricey oils

Rancid oil is inevitable, but you can do a couple of things to delay it. Air, light, and temperature are the enemies, so...

- 1. Purchase** from a store that has high turnover; chances are the oil will be fresher when you buy it.
- 2. Transfer** the oil to a metal or dark-glass container if it didn't come in one, in order to block light.
- 3. Tightly close** the container to keep air out.
- 4. Store** the oil in the refrigerator to keep it cool.

—Jennifer Armentrout



TECHNIQUE

Two ways to tie meat

Tying keeps long-cooked meats, like the barbecue-braised dishes on page 54, from falling apart as they cook. The first method shown here is as easy as tying a slipknot. The second method is a little trickier, but once you get the hang of it, it's faster and it holds the meat together better.

INDIVIDUAL LOOPS



1 Cut several short lengths of butcher's twine. Wrap one piece around the meat and tie with a slipknot.



2 Cinch the slipknot snugly against the meat. Repeat, spacing the loops 2 to 3 inches apart.



3 Trim the excess twine.

ONE LONG STRAND



1 Cut a long piece of twine and tie the end of the twine in a single loop around one end of the meat, securing it with a square knot.



2 Loop the twine around your hand so that the loose end passes underneath the tied end.



3 Slip this loop under and around the meat. Pull the loop snug, adjusting its position as needed.



4 Repeat, spacing the loops 2 to 3 inches apart, until you reach a couple of inches from the end of the meat.



5 Turn the meat over and thread the twine under the loops, back to the starting end.



6 Secure the loose end to the tied end with another knot, and then trim any excess twine.

—Jennifer Armentrout



FAST & FRESH

Make it Tonight

Just 30 minutes to dinner, start to finish.



tex-mex chicken with chiles and cheese

Serve with rice pilaf, or wrap the chicken in warm corn tortillas.

Serves 4

- 1¼ lb. boneless, skinless chicken breast halves, trimmed and sliced ¾ inch thick**
- 1½ tsp. chili powder**
- ½ tsp. ground cumin**
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**
- ½ cup all-purpose flour**
- 3½ Tbs. unsalted butter**
- 1½ cups fresh or thawed frozen corn kernels**
- 1 medium jalapeño, seeded if desired and thinly sliced**
- 1 large clove garlic, minced**
- 2–3 medium limes, 1 or 2 juiced to yield 3 Tbs. and 1 cut into wedges**
- 1 Tbs. chopped fresh oregano**
- 1 cup grated sharp Cheddar**

Position a rack about 4 inches from the broiler and heat the broiler to high. Toss the chicken with the chili powder, cumin, ¾ tsp. salt, and ½ tsp. black pepper. Lightly dredge the chicken in the flour and shake off any excess.

Melt 2½ Tbs. of the butter in a 12-inch ovenproof skillet (preferably cast iron) over medium-high heat. Add the chicken and cook, stirring occasionally, until browned, about 5 minutes. Transfer to a plate.

Add the remaining 1 Tbs. butter, the corn, jalapeño, garlic, and ½ tsp. salt. Cook, stirring, until the corn begins to brown lightly, 2 to 3 minutes. Add the chicken, lime juice, oregano, and ½ cup water. Cook, stirring, until the chicken is just cooked through, about 2 minutes. Sprinkle with the Cheddar and transfer the skillet to the broiler. Broil until the cheese melts and browns on top, about 3 minutes. Serve with lime wedges.

—Tony Rosenfeld

grilled pork chops with sweet-and-sour onions

Garlic bread drizzled with a bit of olive oil is the perfect accompaniment.

Serves 4

- 4 ¾-inch-thick bone-in pork loin chops (1¼ to 2 lb.)**
- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil**
- 1 Tbs. chopped fresh thyme**
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**
- 1½ lb. red onions (about 3 medium), peeled and cut into ¼- to ½-inch-thick disks**
- ½ cup red wine vinegar**
- 1 Tbs. granulated sugar**

Prepare a medium-high fire on a gas or charcoal grill. In a medium bowl, toss the pork chops with 1 Tbs. of the oil, half of the thyme, 1 tsp. salt, and ½ tsp. pepper. Put the onions on a large plate and sprinkle with 2 Tbs. of the oil and 1½ tsp. salt. In a small bowl, whisk the vinegar, sugar, and the remaining thyme.

Grill the onions, covered, flipping once, until crisp-tender, 5 to 6 minutes per side. Return to the plate. Grill the pork, covered, flipping once, until firm to the touch and just cooked through, 3 to 4 minutes per side.

Transfer the pork to a large platter, brush with some of the vinegar mixture and tent loosely with foil. Heat the remaining 1 Tbs. oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat until it's shimmering hot. Add the onions and the remaining vinegar mixture and cook, stirring, until they absorb all of the liquid and take on a browned, glazed appearance, 3 to 4 minutes. Serve the pork chops with the onions.

—Tony Rosenfeld





vegetables and tofu with spicy peanut sauce

On the Indonesian island of Java, this hearty, main-course salad—known as *gado-gado*—is sold by street vendors, who carry the ingredients on yoke-like poles, assembling each serving to order. It's surprisingly easy to make.

Serves 2 to 3

- 4 medium red potatoes (12 oz.), cut into ½-inch-thick slices**
- 2 medium carrots (4 oz.), peeled and cut on the diagonal into ½-inch-thick slices**
- 7 oz. package pressed, baked tofu (regular or Thai flavor), sliced into 1-inch-square pieces, ½ inch thick**
- 1 small crown broccoli (7 oz.), cut into 1-inch florets**
- 3 oz. green beans, trimmed and halved crosswise on the diagonal**
- ½ cup natural unsalted peanut butter (smooth or chunky)**
- 1 Tbs. soy sauce**
- 1½ tsp. Asian chile paste, such as sambal oelek; more to taste**
- Kosher salt**

Put a steamer basket in a large pot and fill the pot with water to just reach the bottom of the basket.

Put the potatoes in a single layer in the steamer basket, set the pot over medium-high heat, and bring the water to a boil. Cover the pot and cook for 4 minutes, then carefully remove the lid, move the potatoes to one side of the pot, and add the carrots in a snug, slightly overlapping layer. Cover the pot and steam until the carrots and potatoes are just tender, another 6 to 7 minutes. Transfer the potatoes and carrots to a platter. Put the tofu, broccoli, and beans in the steamer; cover and cook until the tofu is hot and the broccoli and

beans are just tender, about 4 minutes. Transfer to the platter with the other vegetables.

In a medium bowl, combine the peanut butter, soy sauce, chile paste, and ½ cup hot water from the pot. Whisk to combine, adding more water as needed to create a thick but fluid sauce. Add more chile paste and salt to taste. Serve with the sauce on the side.

—Dabney Gough



clams with basil broth

Quick and tasty: rich, tender steamed clams in an aromatic white wine broth. Serve with plenty of crusty sourdough bread for dipping.

Serves 4

- 4 lb. littleneck clams**
- ¾ cup finely diced yellow onion**
- ½ cup dry white wine**
- 1½ tsp. minced garlic**
- 2 Tbs. chopped fresh basil**
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**

Scrub the clams with a brush under cold water to remove any sand; rinse well. Discard any with cracked shells or open shells that don't close when tapped firmly against the counter.

In a 5- to 6-quart pot, combine the onion, wine, garlic, and 1 cup water; bring to a boil over high heat. Add the clams, cover, and steam until they open, about 5 minutes—begin checking the clams early to avoid overcooking.

Transfer the clams to serving bowls, discarding any that don't open. Stir the basil into the cooking liquid, season to taste with salt and pepper, and pour over the clams. Serve immediately.

—Bonnie Gorder-Hinchey

duck breasts with peaches and tarragon

If ripe fresh apricots are available, you can use them instead of peaches.

Serves 4

- 2 1-lb. boneless duck breasts**
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**
- 1 Tbs. unsalted butter**
- 2 medium shallots, thinly sliced (½ cup)**
- 6 Tbs. dry white wine or dry vermouth**
- 6 Tbs. lower-salt chicken broth**
- 3 medium peaches (or 6 medium apricots), pitted and sliced ½ inch thick**
- 1 Tbs. chopped fresh tarragon leaves**
- 2 tsp. mild honey, such as clover honey**

Heat the oven to 425°F. Score the skin and fat on each breast without cutting into the meat. Season with ½ tsp. salt and ¼ tsp. pepper.

Heat a 12-inch ovenproof skillet over medium heat. Add the breasts skin side down and cook until the skin is browned and crisp, about 6 minutes. Flip and put the skillet in the oven. Roast until an instant-read thermometer inserted in the center registers 130° to 135°F for medium rare, 8 to 9 minutes.

Transfer the duck to a cutting board. Discard all but 1 Tbs. fat from the skillet. Swirl in the butter and return the skillet to medium heat. Add the shallots and cook, stirring often, until softened, about 2 minutes. Add the wine and simmer until reduced by half, about 2 minutes. Add the broth and simmer until reduced by half, another 2 minutes. Add the peaches, tarragon, honey, ¼ tsp. salt, and ½ tsp. pepper. Stir until the sauce is bubbling, 1 minute.

Slice the duck and serve with the fruit sauce.

—Bruce Weinstein and Mark Scarbrough



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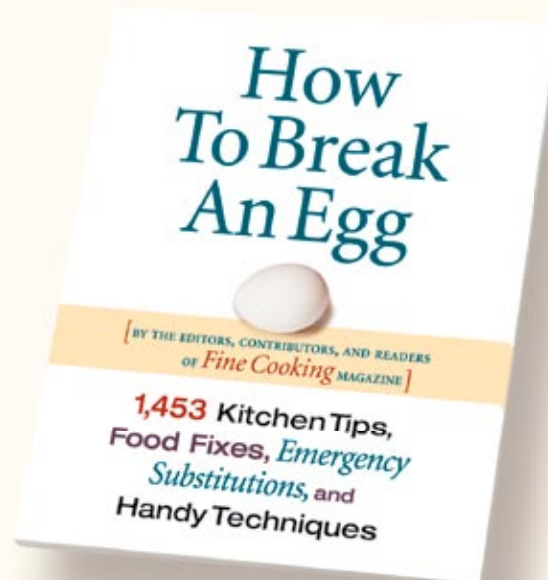
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WHERE TO BUY IT

green beans, page 38

- **Hot (picante) pimentón de la Vera**, \$9.95 for two 2.5-oz. tins, latienda.com, 800-710-4304.
- **Marcona almonds**, \$8.95 for a 5.3-oz. jar, latienda.com, 800-710-4304.
- **Wooden boxes** courtesy of Rose Garbien at Bittersweet Ridge, Roxbury, Connecticut, 860-355-2644.



barbecue-braising, page 54

- **All-Clad LTD2 8-quart stock pot with lid**, \$380, williams-sonoma.com, 877-812-6235. Note: LTD2 pots are not meant for use on charcoal grills but are safe to use on gas grills.
- **Weber Genesis S-310 stainless-steel grill**, about \$900, weber.com for stores.
- **DBO Home Burl pasta bowl**, color Celery, \$75, dbohome.com, 860-364-6008.

repertoire, page 26

- **All Clad 4-quart stainless-steel saucepan**, \$184.95, cooking.com/fc, 800-663-8810.
- **Miu 7-inch stainless-steel mesh strainer**, \$21.95, cooking.com/fc, 800-663-8810.
- **Mikasa Parchment soup bowl**, \$14.99, mikasa.com, 866-645-2721.
- **KitchenAid 4-speed blender**, \$99.99, shopkitchenaid.com, 800-541-6390.

ice cream, page 46

- **Cuisinart Pure Indulgence 2-quart frozen yogurt, ice cream, and sorbet maker**, \$79.95, cooking.com/fc, 800-663-8810.
- **Lello 4070 Gelato Junior**, \$194.29, amazon.com.
- **Large waffle cones** courtesy of Matt's Supreme Cones, mattscones.com, 800-888-2377.
- **The Perfect Purée of Napa Valley passionfruit concentrate**, 15-oz. jar for \$17.50 plus shipping, perfectpuree.com, or 888-556-3707 for stores.



front cover

- **DBO Home Burl large round plate**, color Steamer, \$98, dbohome.com, 860-364-6008.

drinks, page 36

- **Roost Marseilles small beverage dispenser**, \$170, velocityartanddesign.com, 866-781-9494.
- **Pier 1 Imports stemless martini and wine glasses**, \$2, pier1.com, 800-245-4595.
- **Domaine Ste. Michelle Brut**, \$9.99 for a 750-ml bottle, wallywine.com, 888-992-5597.
- **Linie Norwegian Aquavit**, \$34.99 for a 750-ml bottle, wallywine.com, 888-992-5597.



picnic, page 62

- **Ground sumac** (sumac powder), \$3.99 for a 2-oz. package, kalustyans.com, 800-352-3451.
- **Black sesame seeds**, \$4.99 for a 4-oz. package, kalustyans.com, 800-352-3451.
- **BioPlus Earth food containers** courtesy of Fold-Pak, fold-pak.com/products_bioplus.htm for stores.
- **All-Occasion Veneerware bamboo plates and flatware**, prices vary, bambuhome.com for stores.
- **Corn-based plastic containers**, ecoproducts.com/store.htm, or call 303-449-1876.
- **Seventh Generation natural paper napkins**, 500-count, \$9.02, amazon.com.



test kitchen, page 81

- **CDN large grill surface thermometer**, \$7.99, kapers.com, 800-455-5567.
- **Mustapha's Moroccan harissa**, \$8.01 for a 10-oz. jar, chefshop.com, 800-596-0885.
- **2½-inch round ring mold**, \$8.47, culinarycookware.com, 800-305-5415.

menus, page 92

- **Wine recommendations** courtesy of Patrick Watson at Smith & Vine in Brooklyn, New York. For more wine ideas, go to smithandvine.com, or call 718-243-2864.

crab cakes, page 70

- **Peekytoe crabmeat**, market price, brownetrading.com, 800-944-7848.
- **Espelette pepper (piment d'Espelette)**, \$8 for a ½-oz. bag, adrianascaravan.com, 800-316-0820.
- **Medium shredded and desiccated unsweetened coconut flakes**, \$6.99 for an 8-oz. bag, kalustyans.com, 800-352-3451.



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www.chefschoice.com

Dacor *p. 80* Since 1965, Dacor® has redefined the modern kitchen with a collection that offers the best balance of style and performance. Dacor is in the details.
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NUTRITION

| Recipe | Calories (kcal) | Fat Cal (kcal) | Protein (g) | Carb (g) | Total Fat (g) | Sat Fat (g) | Mono Fat (g) | Poly Fat (g) | Chol (mg) | Sodium (g) | Fiber (g) |
|---|-----------------|----------------|-------------|----------|---------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|-----------|------------|-----------|
| KOHLRABI, p. 15 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Kohlrabi-Radish Slaw with Cumin and Cilantro | 120 | 80 | 2 | 10 | 9 | 0.5 | 6 | 2.5 | 0 | 90 | 4 |
| HEARTS OF PALM, p. 22 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Hearts of Palm and Radish Coins with Shrimp (per piece) | 30 | 15 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 15 | 65 | 0 |
| Grilled Hearts of Palm, Radicchio, and Asparagus | 190 | 140 | 7 | 7 | 16 | 3 | 10 | 1.5 | 10 | 800 | 3 |
| Arugula with Hearts of Palm, Grapefruit, and Oil-Cured Olives | 200 | 150 | 3 | 13 | 17 | 2.5 | 12 | 2 | 0 | 490 | 3 |
| VICHYSOISE, p. 26 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Classic Vichyssoise | 300 | 160 | 7 | 30 | 18 | 11 | 5 | 1 | 65 | 210 | 2 |
| HERBS, p. 32 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Penne with Zucchini, Fresh Herbs, and Lemon Zest | 440 | 140 | 15 | 67 | 15 | 2.5 | 10 | 2 | 0 | 450 | 8 |
| DRINKS, p. 36 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| St. Cecilia Society Punch | 270 | 0 | 1 | 30 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Tenant's Harbor Punch | 290 | 0 | 1 | 24 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 10 | 1 |
| GREEN BEANS, p. 38 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Summer Bean Confetti Salad with Pickled Red Onion Vinaigrette | 120 | 80 | 3 | 9 | 9 | 1 | 4 | 3.5 | 0 | 200 | 3 |
| Fusilli with Green Beans, Pancetta, and Parmigiano | 540 | 210 | 20 | 62 | 23 | 10 | 8 | 2.5 | 50 | 1270 | 6 |
| Green Beans with Smoked Paprika and Almonds | 120 | 70 | 4 | 12 | 7 | 1 | 5 | 1.5 | 0 | 290 | 4 |
| Roasted Romanos and Tomatoes with Tapenade | 190 | 150 | 2 | 8 | 17 | 2.5 | 13 | 2 | 0 | 550 | 2 |
| Easy Tapenade (per 1 Tbs.) | 45 | 40 | 0 | 1 | 4.5 | 0.5 | 3.5 | 0.5 | 0 | 135 | 0 |
| Haricots Verts with Toasted Walnuts and Chèvre | 180 | 130 | 6 | 8 | 15 | 3.5 | 4.5 | 7 | 5 | 340 | 3 |
| Spicy Shrimp with Ginger-Garlic Long Beans | 210 | 70 | 20 | 10 | 8 | 1 | 3 | 3.5 | 170 | 870 | 2 |
| ICE CREAM, p. 46 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Double Vanilla Bourbon Ice Cream (per ½ cup) | 350 | 230 | 4 | 22 | 26 | 15 | 8 | 1.5 | 215 | 75 | 0 |
| Peach Mascarpone Ice Cream (per ½ cup) | 610 | 478 | 9 | 32 | 52 | 29 | 15 | 2.5 | 290 | 110 | 1 |
| Rocky Road Ice Cream (per ½ cup) | 470 | 320 | 6 | 36 | 36 | 20 | 10 | 2 | 215 | 80 | 2 |
| Rum Raisin Ice Cream (per ½ cup) | 410 | 230 | 5 | 39 | 26 | 15 | 8 | 1.5 | 215 | 80 | 1 |
| Strawberry Pound Cake Ice Cream (per ½ cup) | 430 | 250 | 5 | 43 | 28 | 16 | 9 | 1.5 | 220 | 105 | 1 |
| BARBECUE-BRAISING, p. 54 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Barbecue-Braised Bourbon Beef with Mustard Glaze | 400 | 140 | 47 | 8 | 15 | 6 | 8 | 1 | 120 | 510 | 1 |
| Barbecue-Braised Moroccan Lamb Shanks with Honey-Mint Glaze | 610 | 100 | 52 | 77 | 11 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 130 | 1130 | 14 |
| Barbecue-Braised Thai Chicken Legs with Lemongrass Glaze | 370 | 170 | 34 | 15 | 19 | 5 | 7 | 4.5 | 105 | 970 | 1 |
| Barbecue-Braised Country Spareribs with Beer and Mustard Glaze | 560 | 310 | 35 | 22 | 35 | 13 | 15 | 3.5 | 130 | 660 | 2 |
| Barbecue-Braised Vietnamese Short Ribs with Sweet Vinegar Glaze | 580 | 280 | 50 | 25 | 31 | 11 | 14 | 3.5 | 110 | 1750 | 2 |
| PICNIC, p. 62 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Brined Grilled Chicken Breasts with Red Chile Oil (with 1 Tbs. oil) | 300 | 180 | 27 | 2 | 20 | 3 | 13 | 2.5 | 75 | 300 | 0 |
| Bulgur Salad with Wilted Chard and Green Olives | 270 | 160 | 5 | 25 | 18 | 2.5 | 13 | 2 | 0 | 850 | 7 |
| Charred Peppers with Garlic and Sherry Vinegar | 100 | 60 | 1 | 8 | 7 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 100 | 2 |
| Toasted Pita with Black Sesame Seeds and Sumac (per piece) | 50 | 20 | 1 | 6 | 2.5 | 0 | 1.5 | 0 | 0 | 105 | 1 |
| Garlic-Yogurt Sauce (per 1 Tbs.) | 25 | 20 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0.5 | 1.5 | 0 | 0 | 50 | 0 |
| Ginger-Spice Sandwich Cookies with Lemon Cream (per cookie) | 150 | 50 | 1 | 24 | 6 | 4 | 1.5 | 0 | 25 | 55 | 0 |
| CRAB CAKES, p. 70 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Classic Maryland Crab Cakes | 340 | 200 | 23 | 9 | 23 | 6 | 7 | 7 | 140 | 890 | 0 |
| Lime-and-Coconut-Marinated Peekytoe "Crab Cakes" | 350 | 250 | 15 | 11 | 28 | 5 | 15 | 7 | 45 | 580 | 2 |
| DINNER SALADS, p. 74 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Spinach and Artichoke Salad with Couscous Cakes and Feta | 710 | 390 | 20 | 63 | 44 | 8 | 24 | 9 | 155 | 1580 | 9 |
| Pan-Seared Salmon with Baby Greens and Fennel | 620 | 330 | 41 | 14 | 38 | 4.5 | 25 | 6 | 105 | 650 | 4 |
| Grilled Steak Salad with Pineapple-Ginger Dressing | 360 | 190 | 33 | 8 | 22 | 6 | 9 | 5 | 60 | 760 | 1 |
| Almond-Crusted Chicken and Nectarine Salad with Chive Dressing | 680 | 370 | 50 | 31 | 41 | 6 | 23 | 10 | 200 | 700 | 7 |
| TEST KITCHEN, p. 81 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Harissa (per 1 Tbs.) | 50 | 15 | 2 | 6 | 2 | 0 | 1.5 | 0 | 0 | 55 | 1 |
| MAKE IT TONIGHT, p. 86 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Clams with Basil Broth | 140 | 10 | 18 | 8 | 1.5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 45 | 360 | 1 |
| Vegetables and Tofu with Spicy Peanut Sauce | 530 | 260 | 30 | 41 | 29 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1070 | 10 |
| Tex-Mex Chicken with Chiles and Cheese | 470 | 210 | 38 | 28 | 23 | 13 | 4 | 1.5 | 130 | 610 | 3 |
| Duck Breasts with Peaches and Tarragon | 310 | 130 | 25 | 17 | 14 | 4.5 | 6 | 1.5 | 140 | 300 | 2 |
| Grilled Pork Chops with Sweet-and-Sour Onions | 370 | 190 | 25 | 21 | 21 | 4.5 | 13 | 2.5 | 60 | 760 | 3 |

The nutritional analyses have been calculated by a registered dietitian at Nutritional Solutions in Melville, New York. When a recipe gives a choice of ingredients, the first choice is the one used. Optional ingre-

dients with measured amounts are included; ingredients without specific quantities are not. Analyses are per serving; when a range of ingredient amounts or servings is given, the smaller amount or portion

is used. When the quantities of salt and pepper aren't specified, the analysis is based on ¼ tsp. salt and ½ tsp. pepper per serving for entrées, and ½ tsp. salt and ¼ tsp. pepper per serving for side dishes.



MENUS



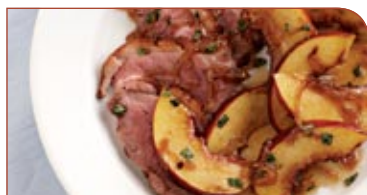
dinner from the grill

Tenant's Harbor Punch
page 37

Brined Grilled Chicken Breasts
with Red Chile Oil
page 64

Grilled Hearts of Palm,
Radicchio, and Asparagus
page 23

Grilled Mixed Fruits with
Island Spices and Dark Rum
FineCooking.com



quick elegance

Duck Breasts with
Peaches and Tarragon
page 87

Green Beans with
Smoked Paprika and Almonds
page 44

Real Chocolate Mousse
FineCooking.com

To drink:
Bourgogne Rouge, 2006



vegetarian night

Classic Vichyssoise
page 27

Arugula with Hearts of Palm,
Grapefruit, and Oil-Cured Olives
page 23

Penne with Zucchini, Fresh
Herbs, and Lemon Zest
page 33

*To drink: Austrian
Grüner Veltliner, 2006 or 2007*

guys' night in

Toasted Pita with
Black Sesame Seeds and Sumac
page 66

Garlic-Yogurt Sauce
page 66

Barbecue-Braised Country
Spareribs with Beer and
Mustard Glaze
page 56

Kohlrabi-Radish Slaw
with Cumin and Cilantro
page 17

Whiskey Gingerbread Ice Cream
page 52

To drink: oatmeal stout or porter



late lunch

St. Cecilia Society
Punch
page 37

Hearts of Palm and
Radish Coins with Shrimp
page 22

Pan-Seared Salmon with
Baby Greens and Fennel
page 77

Peaches and Cream
Parfait
FineCooking.com



the new sunday roast

Barbecue-Braised Bourbon
Beef with Mustard Glaze
page 60

Basic Soft Polenta
FineCooking.com

Charred Peppers with
Garlic and Sherry Vinegar
page 67

*To drink: Scotch ale
or dry stout*



surf and turf

Clams with Basil Broth
page 87

Grilled Steak Salad
with Pineapple-Ginger Dressing
page 78

Ginger-Spice Sandwich Cookies
with Lemon Cream
page 68

*To drink: Washington state
Syrah, 2002 to 2005*





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 St. Cecilia Society Punch **37**

 Tenant’s Harbor Punch **37**

 **VEGETARIAN:** May contain
eggs and dairy ingredients

 **MAKE AHEAD:** Can be com-
pletely prepared ahead (may
need reheating and a garnish
to serve)

 **QUICK:** Under 30 minutes



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Gary Vaynerchuk

Unstuffing the wine world, one cork at a time.

BY LISA WADDLE

Fine Cooking: You're kind of crazy (no offense), unscripted, and loud on your low-budget Web show. How do you get more than 80,000 people to watch you every day?

Vaynerchuk: I know I'm high energy and in-your-face, and that can turn people off. But anyone who's watched more than three of my shows knows that I know a lot about wine.

FC: Who are these self-proclaimed "Vayniacs"?

Vaynerchuk: I love my fans. I think they're so passionate because I don't talk down to them. Look, I'm not trying to help people figure out which elevation in Argentina is perfect to grow Malbec; I'm trying to get them to understand that wine is one of the few luxuries in life that even doctors say we're allowed to enjoy. I want it to be more inclusive rather than exclusive, which wine has been for so long. I get emails from people in their twenties up to senior citizens.

FC: You describe wines as tasting like Skittles candy, sweaty socks, or Cinnamon Toast Crunch cereal, words you don't see in traditional tasting notes for wine. Are you trying to be flippant?

Vaynerchuk: I'm trying to rebrand wine. Most people look at the back of a bottle of wine and read, "aroma of currant leaves with a taste of slate." Yet they've never licked slate, so how can they know what that tastes like? I want to use descriptions everyone can understand. And it's not in my DNA to say I like a wine just because other critics do. If I think a wine is massively overrated or doesn't bring the thunder, I say so.

FC: "Bring the thunder"?

Vaynerchuk: That's my ultimate stamp of approval. My buddies and I started saying that when we were like 12 or 13—you made a basket or were good at Nintendo, you brought the thunder. One day it just slipped out on my Webcast and people loved it.

FC: When you rate a wine poorly, doesn't that hurt sales at your store?

Vaynerchuk: Ask my dad; he owns the place. Fortunately, he's very supportive of what I do. I can't say I like something if I don't. And I'm not asking people to trust me more than they trust the wine snobs. My message is, Don't trust anybody. Trust your own palate.

FC: Give me an example of one of your more memorable Webcasts?

Vaynerchuk: I went outside and tasted during a snowstorm, to show how temperature can affect wine.

FC: You've appeared on Ellen DeGeneres and Conan O'Brien; how does it feel to be a wine rock star?

Vaynerchuk: I think I'm bigger than Oprah, but I'm nobody. I'm confident, and I'm also very hungry. I think that saves my ass to some degree, that I'm this great contradiction.

FC: At what moment did you feel you had "made it"?

Vaynerchuk: I'm not there yet. My dream is to buy my all-time favorite team, the New York Jets. So I still have a lot to do.



Watch some of Gary's greatest hits at FineCooking.com/extras.

Illustration by Ward Schumaker



the dish

Name: Gary Vaynerchuk

Age: 33

Job: Hosts daily wine Webcast; director of operations at the Wine Library store

Started: 2006

Where: Springfield, New Jersey

Known for: New York Jets spit bucket

Find out more: tv.winelibrary.com

WISCONSIN BLUE

Never holds his tongue.

Not one for idle CHITCHAT, Blue doesn't waste time with social pleasantries. When ordering a bottle of red, he neither asks the sommelier for advice nor requests to see the WINE list. Pinot noir it is. That's Blue. He's bold, determined, and opinionated. To not LOVE him is to not know him. And to not know him is a crying shame.





He spent decades researching the right wood
for his wine barrels.

You can taste the results in just a sip.

Robert Mondavi believed that finesse and care were equal
ingredients to the grapes themselves. At the time, people
thought him a bit obsessive. Which is the very same reason
people drink Woodbridge by Robert Mondavi today.

His name is on the bottle. His story is in it.

WOODBIDGE

by Robert Mondavi

